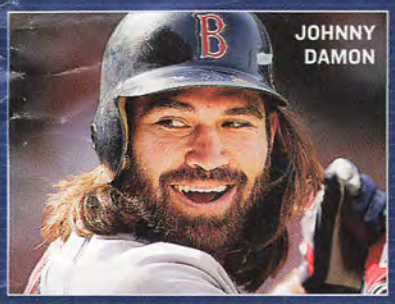

BOSTON'S WILD BUNCH

THE ROWDY RED SOX RUMBLE WITH THE YANKEES

WHAT PHIL JACKSON THINKS OF KOBE BRYANT NOW P. 18

Sports Illustrated

19 STRAIGHT

The Patriots Break The NFL Record

Tom Brady knocks off Miami

THE STREAK

TITANS	38–30
GIANTS	17–6
DOLPHINS	19–13
BROWNS	9–3
BRONCOS	30–26
COWBOYS	12–0
TEXANS	23–20
COLTS	38–34
DOLPHINS	12–0
JAGUARS	27–13
JETS	21–16
BILLS	31–0
TITANS	17–14
COLTS	24–14
PANTHERS	32–29
COLTS	27–24
CARDINALS	23–12
BILLS	31–17
DOLPHINS	24–10
SEAHAWKS	???

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OCTOBER 18, 2004
VOLUME 101, NO. 15

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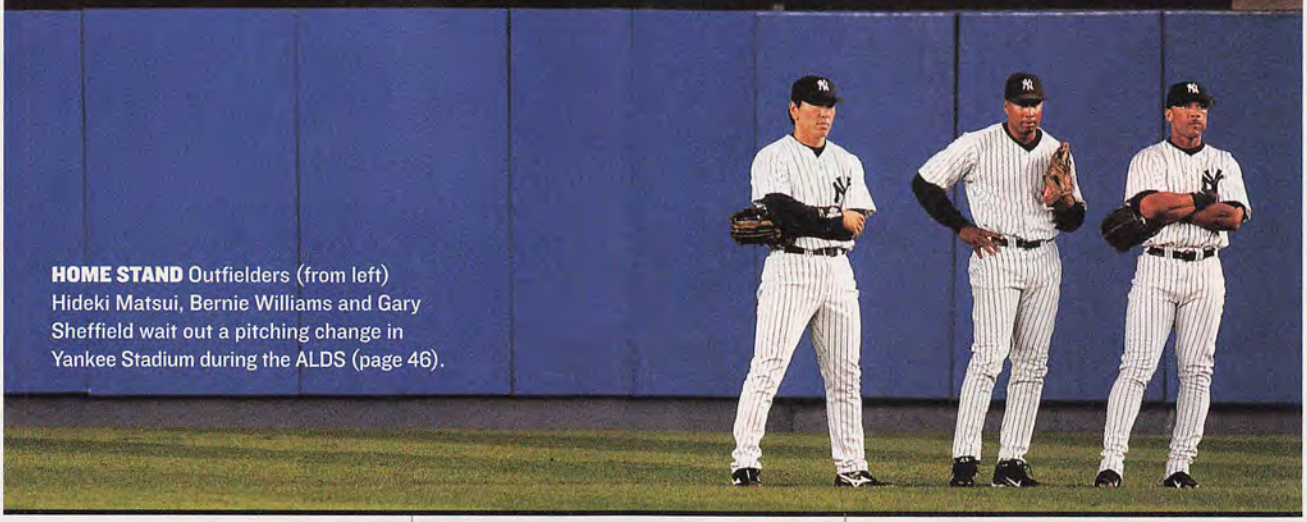

HOME STAND Outfielders (from left) Hideki Matsui, Bernie Williams and Gary Sheffield wait out a pitching change in Yankee Stadium during the ALDS (page 46).

CHUCK SOLOMON

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PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMIAN STROHMEYER
INSET PHOTO: ROBERT BECK

SI Extra

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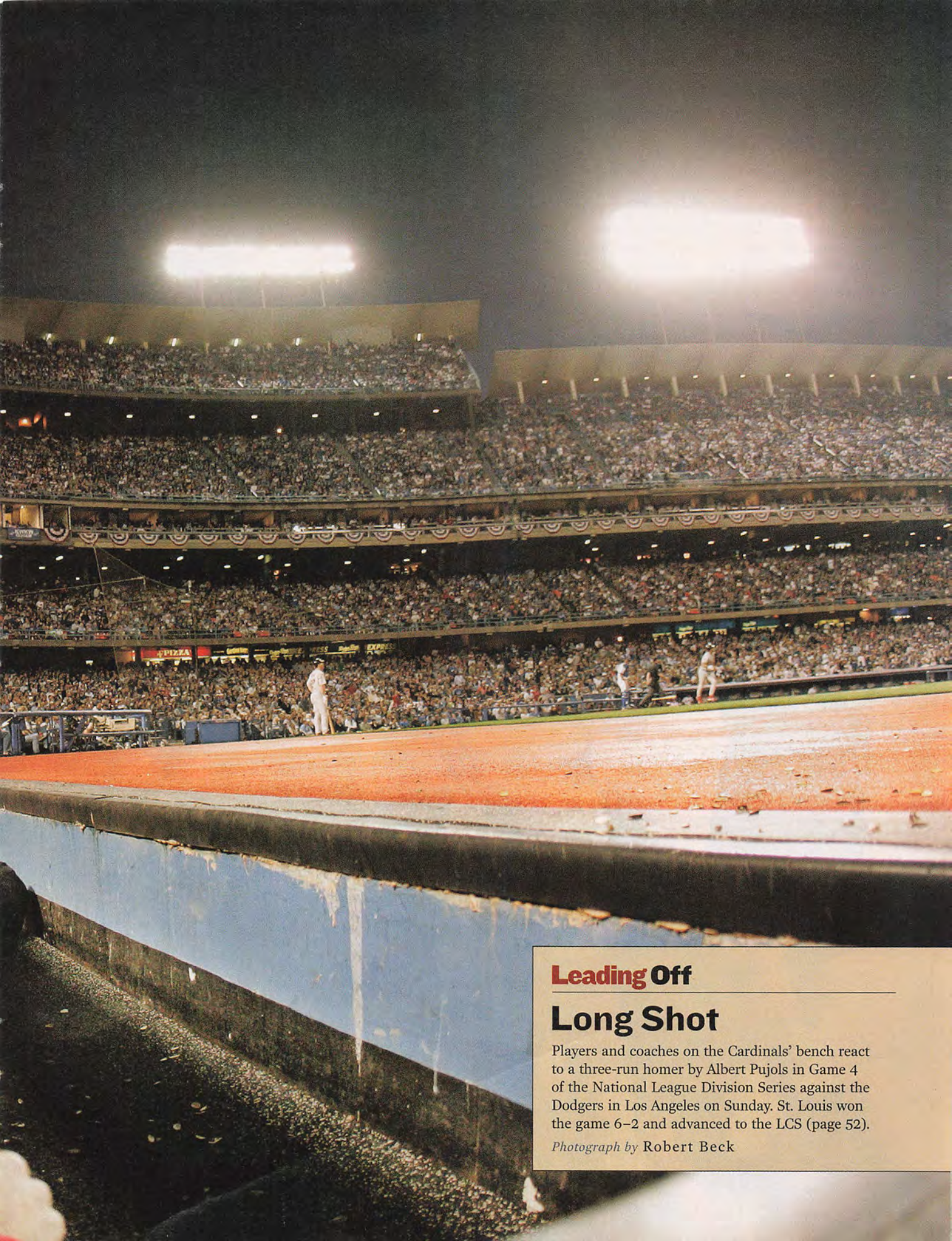
WHITLEY
69

Leading Off

Patriot Missile

New England linebacker Tedy Bruschi launches himself over Miami's Sammy Morris (31) to get in the face of Dolphins quarterback Jay Fiedler in the Patriots' 24–10 victory on Sunday (page 66).

Photograph by Jim Rogash/WireImage.com



Leading Off

Long Shot

Players and coaches on the Cardinals' bench react to a three-run homer by Albert Pujols in Game 4 of the National League Division Series against the Dodgers in Los Angeles on Sunday. St. Louis won the game 6–2 and advanced to the LCS (page 52).

Photograph by Robert Beck

Leading Off

Sun-burned

Connecticut Sun guard Lindsay Whalen blows through the Seattle Storm defense for a layup during Game 1 of the WNBA Finals at the Mohegan Sun Arena in Uncasville, Conn. The Sun won 68–64. Seattle evened the series with a victory on Sunday night to force a deciding game on Tuesday.

Photograph by Manny Millan

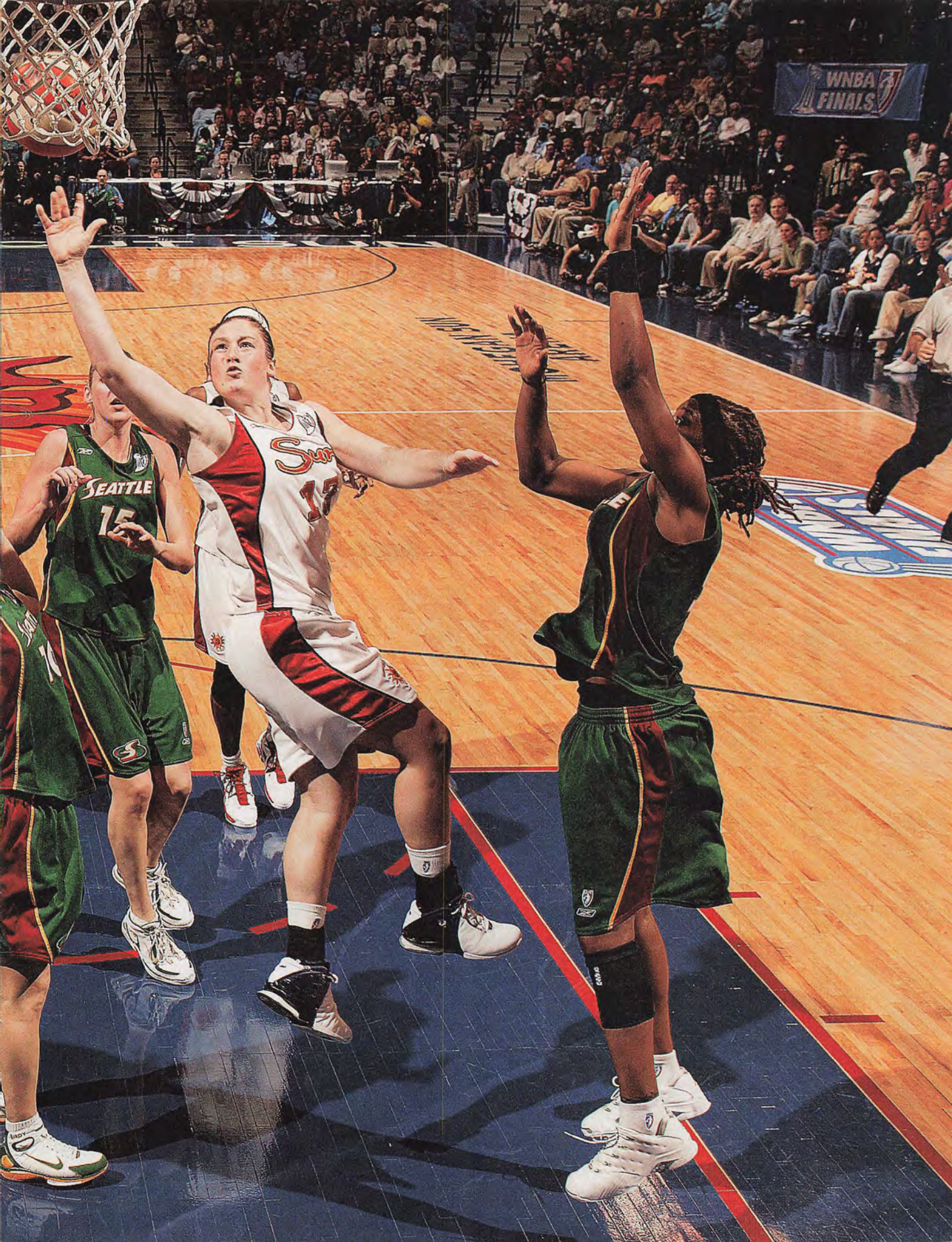

WNBA FINALS
SEATTLE
15

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ILLUSTRATION BY JEFF WONG

A Work of Art

COMMISSIONED: One ceiling-sized poster of your SIstine Chapel 50th anniversary cover (Sept. 27) for my house. Renaissance men Bob Roe, Bill Syken and Jeff Wong have created a masterpiece of sports history that I must take lying down.

Jeff Elder, Denver, N.C.

Sports really does bring delight and renewal to all of us. As the God of creation would certainly say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Joan Barbary, Scituate, Mass.

The Sistine Chapel is a beautiful memorial to the works of Michelangelo and his love for God. To see it replicated as a paean to sports and the materialistic attitudes that permeate our society repulses and saddens me. How angry God must be to see this wonderful tribute to His honor and glory abused and cheapened.

Sharon Wilcox, Tallahassee, Fla.

Bob Roe had it right in the beginning—a really sick idea.

John S. Ritchie, Lebanon, Ohio

I know that to many Americans who are secular humanists, parodying Michelangelo's masterpiece with the images of athletes is merely a matter of replacing one mythology with another. However, when I looked closely at how the images of the story of Creation (which is a story of great love and spiritual depth) had been replaced with the images of athletes (who epitomize shallowness and self-centeredness), I realized how great the offense was.

Trygve Gaalaas, Fairfax, Va.

Although religion too often defines the differences between people, the passion for sports is universal. You have underscored that message beautifully. Bravo!

Stan Friedland, Syosset, N.Y.

I teach kindergarten–12th grade art in rural western Montana, and I was delighted to see the appropriation of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel frescoes on your cover. Jeff Wong's illustration was a great teaching tool to spur my students' interest in Renaissance art via user-friendly sports analogies from the 20th century. I appreciate the humor and seriousness with which it was executed. What a score for cultural literacy!

Jennifer Ogden, Victor, Mont.

Of all the things I could have imagined being on the cover of SI, Al Davis without pants was definitely not one of them.

Scot Robison, Charlotte

Jeanne Therapy

Your 50th Anniversary Issue pulled me through the darkest hours of Hurricane Jeanne. Reading by flashlight—alone in a two-foot-by-four-foot safe room—kept my mind off the screaming wind and pounding rain for more than eight hours in the dark.

Tom Cummings, West Palm Beach, Fla.

Golden Memories

The collections of Signs of the Apocalypse, They Said Its and *Dumbest Sports Moments* are priceless. Any time this 69-year-old lady needs a pick-me-up, she will pick up the 50th Anniversary Issue of SI. Thanks for the memories and the fun.

Jackie Derouen, Houston

In *Dumbest Sports Moments*, how could you have possibly missed 1979's Disco Demolition night at Comiskey Park? It's not too often you see a baseball game forfeited due to a riot and shattered vinyl records covering the diamond.

Dave Leash, Golden, Colo.

Body Language

I take advantage of your offer to not receive the swimsuit edition, so that my daughters will not be exposed to more unhealthy and unrealistic body images than they already get from media. Had I known that the 50th Anniversary Issue would contain revealing swimsuit pictures, I would have thrown it away before my children got a chance to thumb through it. Thanks for helping to introduce my four- and ten-year-old daughters and my eight-year-old son to entry-level pornography.

Clark Cothran, Rural Hall, N.C.

I'm disappointed! How could you do the 50th Anniversary Issue without Swimsuit Issue complaint letters?

Gary Duff, Granite City, Ill.

To Contact SI and SI.com

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- Please e-mail us at letters@si.timeinc.com or fax us at 212-467-4049. Letters should include the writer's full name, address and home telephone number and may be edited for clarity and space.

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Duane Thomas, Running Back

JANUARY 24, 1972

IN THE 25 years since he retired from the NFL, former running back Duane Thomas has tried acting, various jobs in sales and hosting a sports talk-radio show—quite a turnabout after developing a reputation for reticence in the early 1970s. He got his "big break" in film when he played a prison inmate in *Dr. Heckyl and Mr. Hype*, a 1980 horror-comedy about an ugly, misshapen podiatrist who ingests an elixir that transforms him into an irresistible ladies' man. "You sure are one ugly little mutha," Thomas says to the podiatrist in one scene. "If you was a bug, I'd step on you, but I'm afraid of what might come out!"

More recently Thomas, a vegetarian and yoga enthusiast, grew avocados outside San Diego. Now he takes on light carpentry work and moving jobs while continuing to help others. In the 1990s he made appearances for the Children's Miracle Network and toured with the USO, visiting troops in Bosnia. This fall Thomas, 57, will go to Zambia with the SEVA Foundation for Children, which is breaking ground on a 10,000-unit housing development in Lusaka.

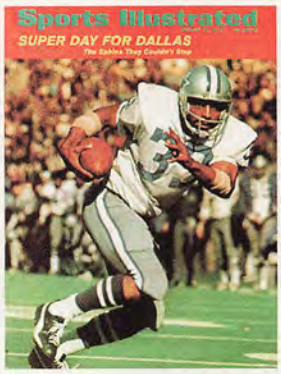
A first-round draft pick of his hometown Dallas Cowboys in 1970, Thomas was voted Rookie of the Year after rushing for 803 yards and five touchdowns as Dallas went to its first Super Bowl. When the club rejected his demand for a new contract before the '71 season and he perceived the media as taking management's side, Thomas did not talk to reporters for five months. "That was one of the hardest times in my life," says Thomas, "but winning helped dissipate some of the negativity." Dallas returned to the title game with Thomas rushing for 95 yards and scoring on a pass in a 24–3 win over the Miami Dolphins.

Fed up with Thomas after he skipped a preseason practice, the Cowboys traded him to the San Diego Chargers in '72. He missed practices in San Diego, too, and was benched for the entire year. "I wasn't going to report [to practice]," says Thomas, "without things being modified in my contract." He spent the next two seasons with the Washington Redskins, then hooked up with Hawaii in the World Football League. He tried comebacks with Dallas and Green Bay before calling it quits in '79.

In 1985 Thomas, who has seven grown children, married for the second time and moved to Hawaii. Four years later his wife, Tapzyana, suggested they return to California. "I've learned that the key to a happy marriage is to marry your second wife first," Thomas says with a laugh, "and that you can disagree without being disagreeable."

If only he had learned that lesson years earlier. —*Andrew Lawrence*

After helping Dallas get to two Super Bowls, Thomas tried acting and grew avocados; now he's a handyman on a mission.



NO SCRIPT Thomas has always been unconventional.

WALTER IOOSS JR. (COVER); ROBERT BECK

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VIAGRA is prescribed to treat erectile dysfunction. We know that no medicine is for everyone. If you use nitrate drugs, often used for chest pain (known as angina), don't take VIAGRA. Taking these drugs together could cause your blood pressure to drop to an unsafe level.

The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, facial flushing, and upset stomach. Less common are bluish or blurred vision, or being sensitive to light. These may occur for a brief time. Remember to protect yourself and your partner from sexually transmitted diseases.

Talk with your doctor first. Make sure you are healthy enough to have sex. If you have chest pain, nausea, or other discomforts during sex, seek medical help right away. The same is true if you have an erection that lasts more than 4 hours. Call for help at once.

VIAGRA is covered under most Managed Care Plans.

* For some men, in as quickly as 10 minutes; for most, in under a half hour (statistical significance at 14 minutes). In this study, VIAGRA responders, given 100 mg 2 hours after eating, were timed to see how fast they got an erection that enabled them to have sex.

† Data on file. Pfizer Inc., New York, NY

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PATIENT SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ABOUT

VIAGRA®

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This summary contains important information about VIAGRA®. It is not meant to take the place of your doctor's instructions. Read this information carefully before you start taking VIAGRA. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you do not understand any of this information or if you want to know more about VIAGRA.

This medicine can help many men when it is used as prescribed by their doctors. However, VIAGRA is not for everyone. It is intended for use only by men who have a condition called erectile dysfunction. **VIAGRA must never be used by men who are taking medicines that contain nitrates of any kind, at any time. This includes nitroglycerin. If you take VIAGRA with any nitrate medicine your blood pressure could suddenly drop to an unsafe or life threatening level.**

• What Is VIAGRA?

VIAGRA is a pill used to treat erectile dysfunction (impotence) in men. It can help many men who have erectile dysfunction get and keep an erection when they become sexually excited (stimulated).

You will not get an erection just by taking this medicine. VIAGRA helps a man with erectile dysfunction get an erection only when he is sexually excited.

• How Sex Affects the Body

When a man is sexually excited, the penis rapidly fills with more blood than usual. The penis then expands and hardens. This is called an erection. After the man is done having sex, this extra blood flows out of the penis back into the body. The erection goes away. If an erection lasts for a long time (more than 6 hours), it can permanently damage your penis. You should call a doctor immediately if you ever have a prolonged erection that lasts more than 4 hours.

Some conditions and medicines interfere with this natural erection process. The penis cannot fill with enough blood. The man cannot have an erection. This is called erectile dysfunction if it becomes a frequent problem.

During sex, your heart works harder. Therefore sexual activity may not be advisable for people who have heart problems. Before you start any treatment for erectile dysfunction, ask your doctor if your heart is healthy enough to handle the extra strain of having sex. If you have chest pains, dizziness or nausea during sex, stop having sex and immediately tell your doctor you have had this problem.

• How VIAGRA Works

VIAGRA enables many men with erectile dysfunction to respond to sexual stimulation. When a man is sexually excited, VIAGRA helps the penis fill with enough blood to cause an erection. After sex is over, the erection goes away.

• VIAGRA Is Not for Everyone

As noted above (*How Sex Affects the Body*), ask your doctor if your heart is healthy enough for sexual activity.

If you take any medicines that contain nitrates – either regularly or as needed – you should never take VIAGRA. If you take VIAGRA with any nitrate medicine or recreational drug containing nitrates, your blood pressure could suddenly drop to an unsafe level. You could get dizzy, faint, or even have a heart attack or stroke. Nitrates are found in many prescription medicines that are used to treat angina (chest pain due to heart disease) such as:

- nitroglycerin (sprays, ointments, skin patches or pastes, and tablets that are swallowed or dissolved in the mouth)
- isosorbide mononitrate and isosorbide dinitrate (tablets that are swallowed, chewed, or dissolved in the mouth)

Nitrates are also found in recreational drugs such as amyl nitrate or nitrite ("poppers"). If you are not sure if any of your medicines contain nitrates, or if you do not understand what nitrates are, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

VIAGRA is only for patients with erectile dysfunction. VIAGRA is not for newborns, children, or women. Do not let anyone else take your VIAGRA. VIAGRA must be used only under a doctor's supervision.

• What VIAGRA Does Not Do

- VIAGRA does not cure erectile dysfunction. It is a treatment for erectile dysfunction.
- VIAGRA does not protect you or your partner from getting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV — the virus that causes AIDS.
- VIAGRA is not a hormone or an aphrodisiac.

• What To Tell Your Doctor Before You Begin VIAGRA

Only your doctor can decide if VIAGRA is right for you. VIAGRA can cause mild, temporary lowering of your blood pressure. You will need to have a thorough medical exam to diagnose your erectile dysfunction and to find out if you can safely take VIAGRA alone or with your other medicines. Your doctor should determine if your heart is healthy enough to handle the extra strain of having sex.

Be sure to tell your doctor if you:

- have ever had any heart problems (e.g., angina, chest pain, heart failure, irregular heart beats, heart attack or narrowing of the aortic valve)
- have ever had a stroke
- have low or high blood pressure
- have a rare inherited eye disease called retinitis pigmentosa
- have ever had any kidney problems
- have ever had any liver problems
- have ever had any blood problems, including sickle cell anemia or leukemia
- are allergic to sildenafil or any of the other ingredients of VIAGRA tablets
- have a deformed penis, Peyronie's disease, or ever had an erection that lasted more than 4 hours
- have stomach ulcers or any types of bleeding problems
- are taking any other medicines

• VIAGRA and Other Medicines

Some medicines can change the way VIAGRA works. Tell your doctor about **any medicines** you are taking. Do not start or stop taking any medicines before checking with your doctor or pharmacist. This includes prescription and nonprescription medicines or remedies:

- Remember, VIAGRA should never be used with medicines that contain nitrates (see *VIAGRA Is Not for Everyone*).
- If you are taking alpha-blocker therapy for the treatment of high blood pressure or prostate problems, you should not take a dose of greater than 25 mg of VIAGRA at the same time (within 4 hours) as you take your dose of alpha-blocker.
- If you are taking a protease inhibitor, your dose may be adjusted (please see *Finding the Right Dose for You*).
- VIAGRA should not be used with any other medical treatments that cause erections. These treatments include pills, medicines that are injected or inserted into the penis, implants or vacuum pumps.

• Finding the Right Dose for You

VIAGRA comes in different doses (25 mg, 50 mg and 100 mg). If you do not get the results you expect, talk with your doctor. You and your doctor can determine the dose that works best for you.

- Do not take more VIAGRA than your doctor prescribes.
- If you think you need a larger dose of VIAGRA, check with your doctor.
- VIAGRA should not be taken more than once a day.

If you are older than age 65, or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg) of VIAGRA. If you are taking protease inhibitors, such as for the treatment of HIV, your doctor may recommend a 25 mg dose and may limit you to a maximum single dose of 25 mg of VIAGRA in a 48 hour period. If you are taking alpha-blocker therapy, you should not take a dose of greater than 25 mg of VIAGRA at the same time (within 4 hours) as your dose of alpha-blocker.

• How To Take VIAGRA

Take VIAGRA about one hour before you plan to have sex. Beginning in about 30 minutes and for up to 4 hours, VIAGRA can help you get an erection if you are sexually excited. If you take VIAGRA after a high-fat meal (such as a cheeseburger and french fries), the medicine may take a little longer to start working. VIAGRA can help you get an erection when you are sexually excited. You will not get an erection just by taking the pill.

• Possible Side Effects

Like all medicines, VIAGRA can cause some side effects. These effects are usually mild to moderate and usually don't last longer than a few hours. Some of these side effects are more likely to occur with higher doses. The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, flushing of the face, and upset stomach. Less common side effects that may occur are temporary changes in color vision (such as trouble telling the difference between blue and green objects or having a blue color tinge to them), eyes being more sensitive to light, or blurred vision.

In rare instances, men have reported an erection that lasts many hours. You should call a doctor immediately if you ever have an erection that lasts more than 4 hours. If not treated right away, permanent damage to your penis could occur (see *How Sex Affects the Body*).

Heart attack, stroke, irregular heart beats, and death have been reported rarely in men taking VIAGRA. Most, but not all, of these men had heart problems before taking this medicine. It is not possible to determine whether these events were directly related to VIAGRA.

VIAGRA may cause other side effects besides those listed on this sheet. If you want more information or develop any side effects or symptoms you are concerned about, call your doctor.

• Accidental Overdose

In case of accidental overdose, call your doctor right away.

• Storing VIAGRA

Keep VIAGRA out of the reach of children. Keep VIAGRA in its original container. Store at 25°C (77°F); excursions permitted to 15-30°C (59-86°F) [see USP Controlled Room Temperature].

• For More Information on VIAGRA

VIAGRA is a prescription medicine used to treat erectile dysfunction. Only your doctor can decide if it is right for you. This sheet is only a summary. If you have any questions or want more information about VIAGRA, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, visit www.viagra.com, or call 1-888-4VIAGRA.

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September 2002

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Debuts Monday, September 13 and runs through the NFL playoffs.

Check your local listings for time and station.

WESTWOOD ONE

Broken but Blessed

by Steve Rushin

SIMON BRUTY

UNUSUAL FOR a man with a broken neck, a broken left wrist, a shattered left kneecap, a massive head wound, manifold internal injuries and a hole in his neck you could fit your fist into, Manute Bol feels fortune-kissed. "It's a miracle," he says. "God did good. If He had broken these legs, I'd have big problems."

Those legs, with their 48-inch inseam, scarcely make a ripple beneath his hospital bedsheets, from which the rest of Bol's body—215 pounds on a 7' 7" frame—emerges like a wisp of smoke. "I *was* down to 205," says Bol, horizontal in his nine-foot bed.

The Dinka Dunker has been hospitalized since a car accident on June 30, when he was pitched from a taxicab onto a Connecticut highway. "In all the time since," says his friend Drew Kearns, "I've never seen him in a bad mood."

On the contrary, Bol feels blessed, saved by God and American ingenuity. Found near death on Route 2 in Colchester, strapped by paramedics to two body boards held together end to end by duct tape, Bol was flown by Life Star helicopter to Hartford Hospital. "If this accident happened anyplace but America," says the native of Sudan, "I wouldn't be talking to you." He is thankful that he can walk, however slowly, down a hospital hallway.

Arthritic knees leave Bol incapable of driving, so he often rearranges his body, like a folding ruler, to fit into a cab. On the night of the accident, after leaving a Connecticut Sun WNBA game, he found himself in a taxi chauffeured by Neville Robinson. Unbeknownst to Bol, the 48-year-old Robinson was driving without a license, which had been suspended after a drunken-driving arrest. While Bol dozed in the backseat, Robinson—according to a preliminary report by Connecticut state police—struck a median guardrail and careened into a rock ledge. He and Bol were ejected when the car apparently cartwheeled. Robinson, who was legally intoxicated, died at the scene. "Should I be mad at someone who's dead?" says Bol. "No, I cannot be."

Some 50,000 of Bol's fellow non-Arab Africans in Sudan have died in the last 18 months, many at the hands of government-sponsored Arab militiamen, in a war that is two decades old. And yet Bol speaks as if he's won life's lotto. "If I didn't play in the NBA," says Bol, "maybe I would be killed in that war." Thus he's given his life savings—his salary averaged $1.5 million during his 10-year NBA career—to his countrymen.

"Manute always felt like the money he made wasn't his," says Chris Mullin, Bol's friend and former teammate with the Golden State Warriors. "He thought it belonged to his country."

"God guided me to America and gave me a good job," says Bol. "But he also gave me a heart, so I would look back."

Indeed, Bol pummeled William (the Refrigerator) Perry on Fox's *Celebrity Boxing* not for the national ridicule, of which there was plenty, but rather for the $35,000 fee, which he quietly donated to a fund for Sudanese orphans. "A lot of people love themselves and no one else," says Bol, recumbent in the Hospital for Special Care in New Britain, Conn. "I didn't throw my money away. I did good things with it."

Which leaves Bol broke, bereft of health insurance and unable to pay his colossal hospital bill. He cannot collect his NBA pension (of $24,000 a year) until he turns 45 in 2007. "He's in real dire straits," says Bol's lawyer, Michael Jainchill. "Cab companies in Connecticut are only required to carry very limited liability coverage, which isn't going to be nearly enough for poor Manute." (Donations can be sent to the Manute Bol Medical & Special Needs Fund, c/o Fleet Bank, 4 N. Main St., West Hartford, Conn., 06107.)

> "If this accident happened anyplace but America," says Manute Bol from his hospital bed, "I wouldn't be talking to you."

Of his former NBA teammates, Bol says he has heard only from Mullin, for whom Manute named his 13-year-old son, Chris. Mullin, now a Warriors executive, will headline a fantasy basketball camp next month in Oakland. (A few openings remain, at $5,000 apiece; details are at warriors.com.) The money raised will put a small dent in the large bill of a very tall man.

"I met Manute through my little brother, who played with him in college [at Bridgeport]," says the Brooklyn-raised Mullin. "He slept at my parents' house on Troy Avenue. These weren't the biggest houses. Manute would sleep in the living room. His *head* was in the living room—his feet were in the kitchen."

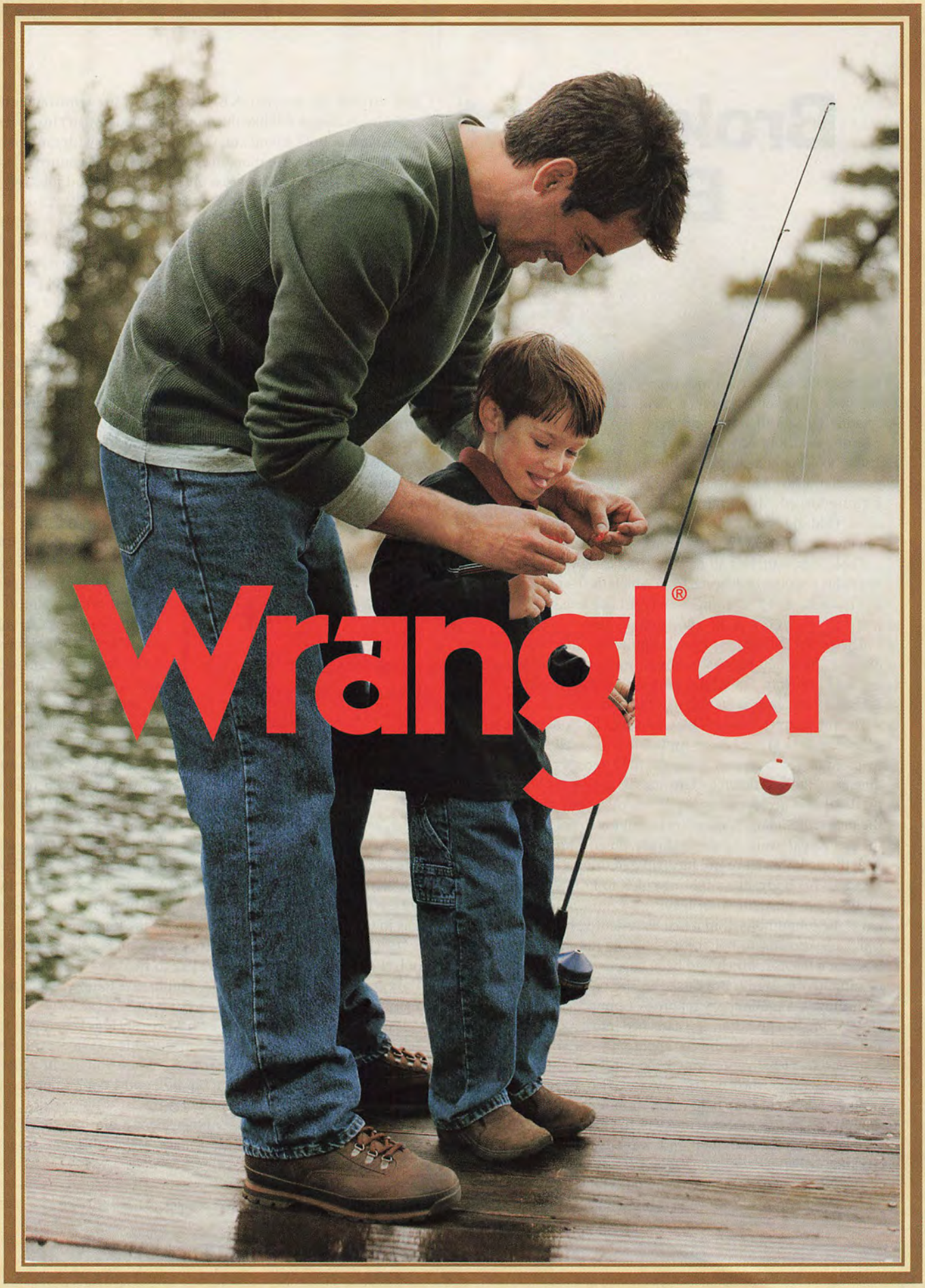
"Chris would take me to an Irish bar with no seats," recalls Bol. "I think the Irish, they don't like to sit."

A continent away in California, Mullin says fondly, "Manute's a guy I think about a lot. And worry about."

Bol is asked to describe his own worries. He is scheduled to leave the hospital this week to continue his convalescence at home. And so he says after a silence, "When you are in a hospital for a long time, you get a big bill, and I don't know how that bill will be paid. That does worry me."

With his 125-inch reach, Bol has spent a lifetime touching people without them ever touching back. Maybe this time, someone will. □

For a collection of Steve Rushin's columns, go to **si.com/writers**.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Drama Club

In an exclusive excerpt from his new book, ex–Lakers coach **Phil Jackson** details the daily soap opera that dominated his final season—and ultimately hastened his departure

AUG. 26 In the first six weeks after the Colorado story broke, I did not speak to Kobe. He never returned my calls. Imagining his anxieties, I was not offended. Kobe will confide only in the people he trusts, and I have never been a card-carrying member of that group. G.M. Mitch Kupchak and I had wondered whether Kobe might sit out the season. We didn't wonder for too long: Kobe's people told us he intended to treat this season like any other. He must be in denial. This season cannot possibly be like any other.

Finally, earlier this week, Kobe came into my office. He looked gaunt, down to a little more than 200 pounds, 10 or 15 below his playing weight.

"We really want you to survive this thing," I told him.

He smiled.

"Are you getting help?" I asked. "Do you have anybody to talk to?"

"No."

"Kobe, you've got to have someone to talk to."

"We have a minister."

"That's a start."

We didn't rehash our conflicts. The conversation was harmless, until Kobe blurted out, "I'm not going to take any s--- from Shaq this year. If he starts saying things in the press, I'll fire back. I've had it."

"We'll watch what's being said," I assured him. "We'll make allowances so you'll be able to do what you have to do and come back to the team. Don't worry."

I gave him a hug. No matter what had gone on between us in the past, he is a member of the Lakers family, and families stick together. I was sure that at least for the moment, his anger was neutralized. After we wrapped up, Kobe headed straight to see Mitch, who later told me that nothing had been neutralized.

"Shaq didn't call me this summer," Kobe told Mitch.

"Kobe, I gave you a message from him," Mitch said. "He invited you to Orlando to get away from everything."

"Shaq didn't have to leave a message through you," he said. "He knew how to reach me."

That exchange revealed the underlying contradiction in Kobe's attitude toward Shaquille. On one hand he insists he doesn't "give a s--- what the big guy does." On the other he shows he cares a great deal about what the big guy does. I decided to enlist a therapist to help me cope with what will surely be the most turbulent season of my coaching career. I selected a therapist who has dealt with narcissistic behavior in the Los Angeles public school system. He'll be right at home here.

OCT. 21 I wonder what Kobe is thinking. Since the charges were made, he has been treated well by the Lakers organization and the fans. We agreed to cover part of his private plane expenses to and from Colorado for court hearings. This will cost thousands of dollars. Kobe was unhappy with the type of plane selected; he wanted one with higher status.

OCT. 28 Why don't the two get along? One theory I have is that Shaquille makes the type of money—about $25 million a year—that Kobe will never earn due to the changes in the league's collective bargaining agreement, no matter how many MVP trophies he might collect. In fact, the word I got was that Kobe was the only player in the league who voted against the agreement because of the cap it put on salaries.

The newspapers have treated the Kobe-Shaq feud, which has reignited with a war of words over the past 72 hours, as if it were the second coming of Cain versus Abel. IT'S THE RETURN OF STAR WARS said the *Los Angeles Times*. I called the therapist. "Get them apart," he said. "Tell them what they're saying about each other is not doing anybody any good." He mentioned a psychological term for

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Jungle Palace, Siegfried and Roy's estate. —FOR THE RECORD, PAGE 21

ard

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE BRODNER; THE PENGUIN PRESS (BOOK)

this damage-control strategy: *suppression*. I took Shaq aside, and Mitch found Kobe.

"We can't have this," I told Shaq. "We're on a mission, and we want nothing more in the press." Shaq was not in the mood to suppress anything. "Phil, I have a stepbrother," he said, "and when I was young, everything I did was wrong and everything he did was O.K. even though he did stuff that I could never get away with. It's the same with Kobe. I end up looking like crap, and he can do whatever he wants. I'd like to pound the chump." I empathized with Shaq but told him the team needed to put the feud behind it. He agreed to keep quiet. This was another example of the difference between him and Kobe. Ask Shaq to do something, and he'll say, "No, I don't want to." But after a little pouting, he'll do it. Ask Kobe, and he'll say, "O.K.," and then he will do whatever he wants. Against our instructions Kobe did an interview with ESPN, vowing that if he were to leave the Lakers, it would be due to Shaq's "childlike selfishness and jealousy." So much for suppression.

JAN. 31 I wonder again if my relationship with Kobe has deteriorated beyond repair. Earlier this week on the way to the practice court, I asked Kobe, still nursing a sore shoulder, if he could do a little running. Sure, he responded, as soon as he finished his treatment. Almost an hour went by, and there was no Kobe sighting. Finally, with an ice pack on his shoulder, he took a seat on the sideline. Kobe had no intention of running. After practice I asked him why he lied. He was being sarcastic, he said. Wrong answer. I can't imagine how difficult this ordeal has been for Kobe, but that doesn't mean I will be the recipient of his displaced anger, especially when I've been on his side since the story broke.

I went to Mitch and went on a tirade about the need to deal Kobe before the trading deadline. "I won't coach this team next year if he is still here," I said. "He won't listen. I've had it with this kid."

FEB. 16 A conversation with Kobe often reveals one of his many narcissistic tendencies. Kobe expressed his disapproval of Shaquille's failure to show up for practice today. "That just shows you what kind of a leader he is," he said. He was angry about the allowances the Lakers afford Shaq, failing to note the hypocrisy. Nobody I've ever coached has received more allowances than Kobe Bryant. At times the pettiness between the two can be unbelievably juvenile. Shaq won't allow himself to be taped by Gary Vitti because he's too aligned with Kobe. Kobe won't let Chip Schaefer, Shaq's guy, tape him.

APRIL 13 Today Kobe went from player to player, showing an article with an anonymous quote criticizing his play. "Right here and right now," he said, "I want to know who said this s---."

Karl Malone finally broke the silence. "Obviously, Kobe, no one wants to admit it," Karl said. "You've got to let it go now." Karl and Kobe, who had become pals, launched into a shouting match that I had to stop.

Desperate measures, I'm beginning to think, might be in order. Maybe we'll return to meditation, something, anything, to improve our karma.

JUNE 18 A day I will never forget. By evening I no longer had a job. I was not surprised, yet the end of any journey is always jarring.

I couldn't help but think of a meeting I had with Kobe in February, trying to salvage a relationship and a season. There was tension, yet Kobe and I did work well together—for four months. Talking to him today, the tension wasn't there. We both knew I would never coach him again.

Mitch, Kobe and I met. I told Kobe how pleased I was with his ability to put aside our conflicts and make a strong commitment to the season. Mitch didn't waste the opportunity to praise Kobe's performances. The next subject was his decision to become a free agent, which killed a minute or two. I then got down to the questions I really wanted to ask.

"Will my presence or absence affect your desire to play for the Lakers?" I asked.

He said I should make up my mind about my future independently of his decision.

"I'm going to retire," I said.

He raised his eyebrows. For the first time in the conversation, I thought I detected emotion.

"Really?" he asked.

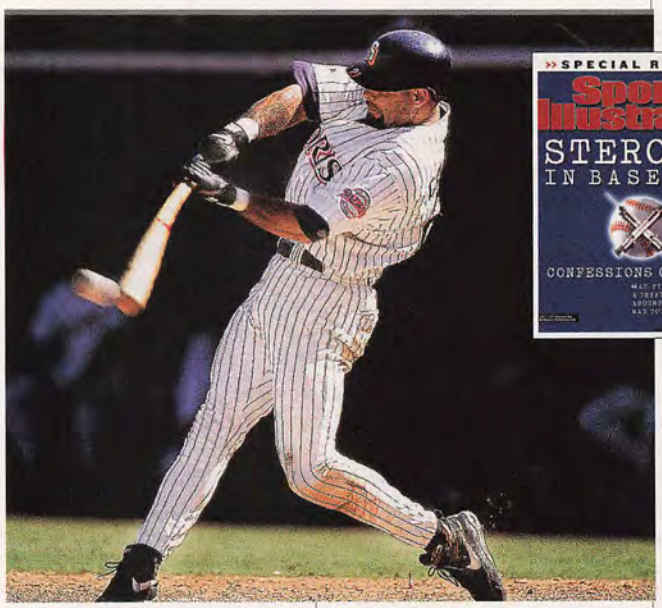
I nodded. The next subject was Shaquille. "Will Shaq's presence on this team color your decision to come back or not?" I asked.

"There's no doubt about that," he said. "I'm tired of being a sidekick." His sentiment came as no surprise. But to hear Kobe say it struck me. I told Kobe I hoped he'd find happiness in basketball and in life. The meeting was over.

I understand why the Lakers treat Kobe as their most valuable asset. His ability to take over a game, to make an impossible play, is unmatched. Yet Kobe is still an employee, and he needs direction and guidance. Kobe is missing out by not finding a way to become part of a system that involves giving to something larger than himself. He could have been the heir apparent to MJ. He may still win a championship or two, but the boyish hero image has been replaced by that of a callous gun for hire. □

Excerpted from *The Last Season: A Team in Search of Its Soul*, by Phil Jackson (The Penguin Press, $24.95)

For the Record



Died *At age 41, Ken Caminiti. SI's Tom Verducci remembers the 1996 NL MVP.*

Shortly after Caminiti joined the Braves in 2001 for the last of his 15 major league seasons, Atlanta hitting coach Merv Rettenmund, a longtime friend, invited him to his home for dinner. Rettenmund and his wife, Susan, talked to Caminiti, a recovering alcoholic, about the chance to live a full, clean life no matter what mistakes he had made in the past.

"No," Caminiti said. "You don't know what I've done. I don't plan to live that long anyway."

On Sunday, Caminiti was dead—of a heart attack, according to his lawyer, Rick Licht. Five days earlier he had admitted in court that he had flunked a drug test, his fourth such lapse since going on probation in 2002 for possession of cocaine. "One time I took him straight from the courthouse to a rehab facility," Licht said, "and told him, 'If you continue down this path, it'll kill you.' And he said to me, 'If it happens, it happens.' "

Caminiti, a three-time All-Star third baseman, had an unyielding grit, particularly when it came to playing through pain. Once, after cracking the nail on his big toe during pregame batting practice, he yanked the nail off with a pair of pliers, wrapped the toe in tape and played in the game without telling the trainers what had happened. Asked why he had not sought help, Caminiti said, "It was almost game time."

Before a game on Aug. 18, 1996, Caminiti was so dehydrated from an upset stomach that he needed two liters of intravenous fluid. He took the IV out, ate a candy bar and smacked two home runs and had four RBIs.

Caminiti won the MVP award with San Diego that year, smashing 40 homers and driving in 130 runs, numbers he never again approached. In May 2002 Caminiti admitted to SI that he had used steroids in 1996 after injuring his left shoulder. He said he continued using steroids for five seasons. "He won the MVP with one shoulder," Rettenmund said. "I talked to him once that season and said, 'Maybe you should take some time off.' He said, 'Don't worry. I'll be all right by the end of the week. I've got a package coming.' That's when I suspected [steroids]. Cammy was a gamer. You won't find anyone who has anything bad to say about him from four o'clock to 10 o'clock at the ballpark."

The idle hours troubled him. Licht once asked him how someone so fit and disciplined in his

Go Figure

$15,140 Prize money—equal to the amount of play cash in the game—won by World Monopoly Championship winner, 36-year-old Antonio Zafra Fernandez of Spain.

266 Consecutive boys' cross-country dual meet victories—dating back to 1974—by Christian Brothers Academy of Lincroft, N.J., a national high school record.

3⅕ Hamburgers that Singapore's Ezra Nicholas, 19, held in his mouth without swallowing, to break the burger-stuffing world record.

99 Consecutive regular-season victories by Division III Mount Union, which beat Wilmington 49–7 last Saturday.

JOHN W. MCDONOUGH (CAMINITI); JAMES PORTO (SI COVER)

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sport could be so reckless with alcohol and drugs. Caminiti shook his head and said, "I just don't understand."

Died At the age of 97, Johnny Kelley, who ran the Boston Marathon a record 61 times, the last time in 1992. Kelley won the country's oldest marathon in '35 and '45, finished second seven times and was as much a part of the race's landscape as Heartbreak Hill; in fact, the difficult climb became known as such in 1936 when Kelley passed Ellison (Tarzan) Brown on the incline (about 20 miles into the race) and tapped Brown on the shoulder as he went by. Though identified most with Boston, Kelley (*below*, in '41) competed all over the world—he was the only American to finish the '36 Olympic marathon in Berlin—and was named Runner of the Century by *Runner's World* in 2000. He also worked a day job as an electrical maintenance man for 35 years (he retired in 1973) and was an avid painter, though he would abstain from his art for three days before a race to conserve energy. Said four-time Boston winner Bill Rodgers, "He was the Boston Marathon."

Wanted By Las Vegas police, former Raiders kicker Cole Ford, 31, who is suspected of committing a drive-by shooting at the home of tigerphilic entertainers Siegfried and Roy *(right)* last month. No one was injured in the shooting, in which several shotgun blasts shattered windows and tore a footwide hole in the wall of Jungle Palace, the performers' Las Vegas estate. A witness at the estate identified Cole's car and alleged that the driver said, "We need to get . . . Siegfried and Roy out of our country." As of Monday, Ford was still at large and considered armed and dangerous.

Protested By fans of Manchester United, Malcolm Glazer's potential takeover of the team. The Buccaneers owner has a 19% stake, worth $239 million, in the team and is reportedly considering making a bid for a controlling interest, with the intention of taking MU private—much to the chagrin of the team's ardent fan base. Last Thursday about 30 supporters, many wearing black hoods, went onto the pitch during a reserves game between Man U and Birmingham City and unfurled a banner that read NOT FOR SALE. Earlier in the week vandals threw red paint on the Jaguar of a club director who had sold Glazer a million shares of the team.

Ended On a high note, the career of swimmer Jenny Thompson, the most decorated U.S. Olympic athlete. Last Saturday, Thompson, 31, won gold in the 50-meter butterfly in her final meet, the World Swimming Championships in Indianapolis—the site of her first international meet, the 1987 Pan Am Games. "It seems like a good place to end it," she said. Thompson *(right)*, who returned to Columbia medical school this week, won 12 Olympic and 15 world championship medals. "I never felt this ready to move on," Thompson said after the meet. "I think that's a good thing for my mental health."

Died Of complications from heart surgery, comedian Rodney Dangerfield, 82, whose portrayal of boorish Al Czervik in 1980's *Caddyshack* provided recreational golfers with a healthy supply of one-liners. After failing to make it as a Catskills comic, Dangerfield worked as an aluminum-siding salesman until he gave showbiz another shot at age 40. His self-deprecating routine made him popular, but his big break came in 1980 when he gave up six weeks of his Vegas act—or about $250,000—for a $35,000 role in *Caddyshack*. He followed that up by playing an aging diver in *Back to School* and a soccer coach in *Ladybugs*. On the day of Dangerfield's death, the joke of the day on his website read, "I tell ya, I get no respect from anyone. I bought a cemetery plot. The guy said, 'There goes the neighborhood.' "

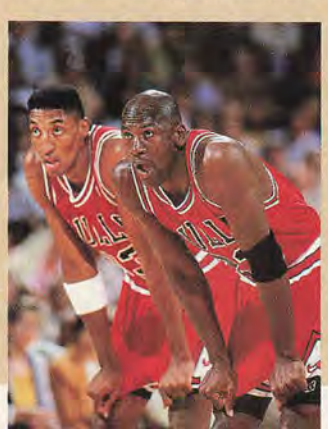
Sidekick Supreme

Though eclipsed by MJ in their shared primes, Scottie Pippen had few peers

THE CAREER of Scottie Pippen, who retired last week after 17 NBA seasons, will no doubt be defined by a single act: his refusal to re-enter a 1994 playoff game because he wasn't being given the last shot. While that moment of pique or fear or whatever it was means something, it should not mean everything.

Pippen was a second banana with top-banana skills. Judging purely on versatility, the pride of Central Arkansas—who could shoot, rebound, pass and defend—had few peers. Michael Jordan's status as first among equals was confirmed when the 1992 Dream Team prepared for and played in the Olympics, but Pippen (*below left*, with Jordan) was arguably the second-best player on that team.

Yet once Jordan left Pippen's universe—they won six championships in Chicago from '91 to '98—Pippen never won another title. He even failed to become Jordan Lite. His year in Houston with Charles Barkley and Hakeem Olajuwon was a study in flawed chemistry, and things got worse when he went to Portland, where he should've been the franchise player but handed the mantle to Rasheed Wallace.



Some are meant to follow, not lead, and after a while, Pippen seemed to know that's how he would always be most comfortable.

—Jack McCallum

JEFF KLEIN/NPA/ZUMA PRESS (SIEGFRIED & ROY); JOHN RAOUX/ORLANDO SENTINEL (DANGERFIELD); HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES (THOMPSON); JOHN W. MCDONOUGH (JORDAN AND PIPPEN); BOSTON HERALD/AP (KELLEY)

The Show

By Bill Scheft

GOOD TO BE HERE. Hey, great news. BALCO is six weeks away from developing a lactose-free steroid cream.

New set of Woods Tiger Woods and Elin Nordegren were married last week in Barbados. Busy couple of days for Tiger. On Monday he renewed his vows with Phil Knight.

The start of the wedding was delayed. Why? Was Bernhard Langer in the twosome ahead of them?

Michael Jordan also came. It was nice MJ could find time in his schedule between not coming out of retirement and not getting any offers of ownership.

Hootie and the Blowfish performed. Tiger loves their music and loves having someone around who's been in a slump longer than he has.

Of course, security on the island was tight. Butch Harmon was detained at the airport when he kept insisting he had to go to the reception and prevent Tiger from slicing the cake.

Red Sox–Yankees: ALDS Lang Syne In the first round Twins manager Ron Gardenhire lost the lead in Game 2 when he left his closer in for a third inning. Or, as it's known among big league insiders, Grady Littleball.

I kept switching between Game 1 of the Yanks-Twins series and the vice presidential debate. At one point I swear I saw Dick Cheney get the green light on 3–0.

Yankees-Sox, Dodgers-Cards . . . everywhere you turn, this country is divided into reds and blues.

Four ranked unbeaten teams fall Or, as the BCS calls it, Sigh of Relief Saturday.

Oklahoma blanked Texas 12–0. Freshman Adrian Peterson ran for 225 yards and was so dominant, Paul Tagliabue put five federal judges on speed dial.

By the end of the game the Longhorns were desperate. Twice Mack Brown asked for a measurement on Jason White's eligibility.

White is in his sixth year at OU. Even the guy on his Heisman Trophy is wearing a red shirt.

Elsewhere, Michigan edged Minnesota 27–24. There was even more at stake this year. The Little Brown Jug was filled with the flu shot vaccine.

Steelers rout Browns 34–23 Pittsburgh is unbeaten with rookie QB Ben Roethlisberger starting. He's come on so strong in the last three weeks, the Steelers' home turf is now known as Heinz Kerry Field.

A woman filed a paternity suit against Ricky Williams. Well, Ricky really wasn't kidding when he said he felt as if he had no protection.

Williams is discussing a possible return to active status in the NFL. He'll either receive a one-year suspension or go on the IR with glaucoma.

NASCAR penalizes the bleep out of Dale Earnhardt Jr. Earnhardt was fined $10,000 and lost 25 Nextel points for cursing on-air. Believe me, the punishment could have been worse. NBC could have imposed a five-second delay on his pit crew.

Dale Jr. or, as he's known, Little E. Not to be confused with Jamal Lewis: Little Plea.

Don Cherry endorsing a line of mouthguards If you're European, they leave a bad taste.

John McEnroe guest stars on *The Apprentice* McEnroe met with the team that won the latest task. What a coincidence. His talk-show audience is also down to the final seven guys.

My time is up. You've been great. Enjoy Desmond Dekker and the Aces.

Bill Scheft recently completed his first Who's the Boss *marathon.*

Q+A

William Shatner

The actor and show horse breeder stars on ABC's *Boston Legal.*

SI: As far as Canadian exports go, has America benefited more from you or Wayne Gretzky?

Shatner: Actually, more from Labatt's beer.

SI: With things like pilates and other advancements in physical fitness, how much better would T.J. Hooker have been as a crime fighter in 2004?

Shatner: The whole thing about pilates is bending, and T.J. Hooker would bend for no one. Especially forward.

SI: You and your wife, Elizabeth, breed and show American saddlebreds and quarter horses, and you and Joe Jackson rock out in a duet on your new album, *Has Been.* What effect would your music have on your horses?

Shatner: You want to make sure that the saddlebred is in the full flower of wildness. So I think Joe Jackson's music would make a high-stepping horse step even higher.

SI: For workout music, should I opt for your version of *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds* or *Mr. Tambourine Man*?

Shatner: I would go with Frank Sinatra and simply lie down.

SI: You took tennis lessons for 20 years from Nels Van Patten, whose father is Dick Van Patten. What's it like being taught tennis by a Van Patten?

Shatner: It's not so much being taught to play tennis by a Van Patten. It's playing Dick Van Patten that is really objectionable. He lobs everything, and it drives you nuts.

SI: Would a magazine called *Shatner Illustrated* do well?

Shatner: It depends on what it illustrates.

SI: You just won an Emmy, and your new album is getting rave reviews. Is it safe to say you are the hottest 73-year-old man on the planet?

Shatner: Ignoring the possibility of this being an obituary, it's possible that I am.

—Richard Deitsch

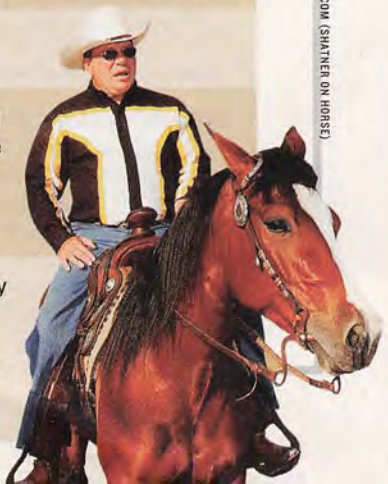


ILLUSTRATION BY JEFF WONG; ROBERT TRACHTENBERG/ABC (SHATNER); GREGG DEGUIRE/WIREIMAGE.COM (SHATNER ON HORSE)

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The most common side effects with Cialis were headache and upset stomach. Backache and muscle ache were also reported, sometimes with delayed onset. Most men weren't bothered by the side effects enough to stop taking Cialis. Although a rare occurrence, men who experience an erection for more than 4 hours (priapism) should seek immediate medical attention. Discuss your medical conditions and medications with your doctor to ensure Cialis is right for you and that you are healthy enough for sexual activity.

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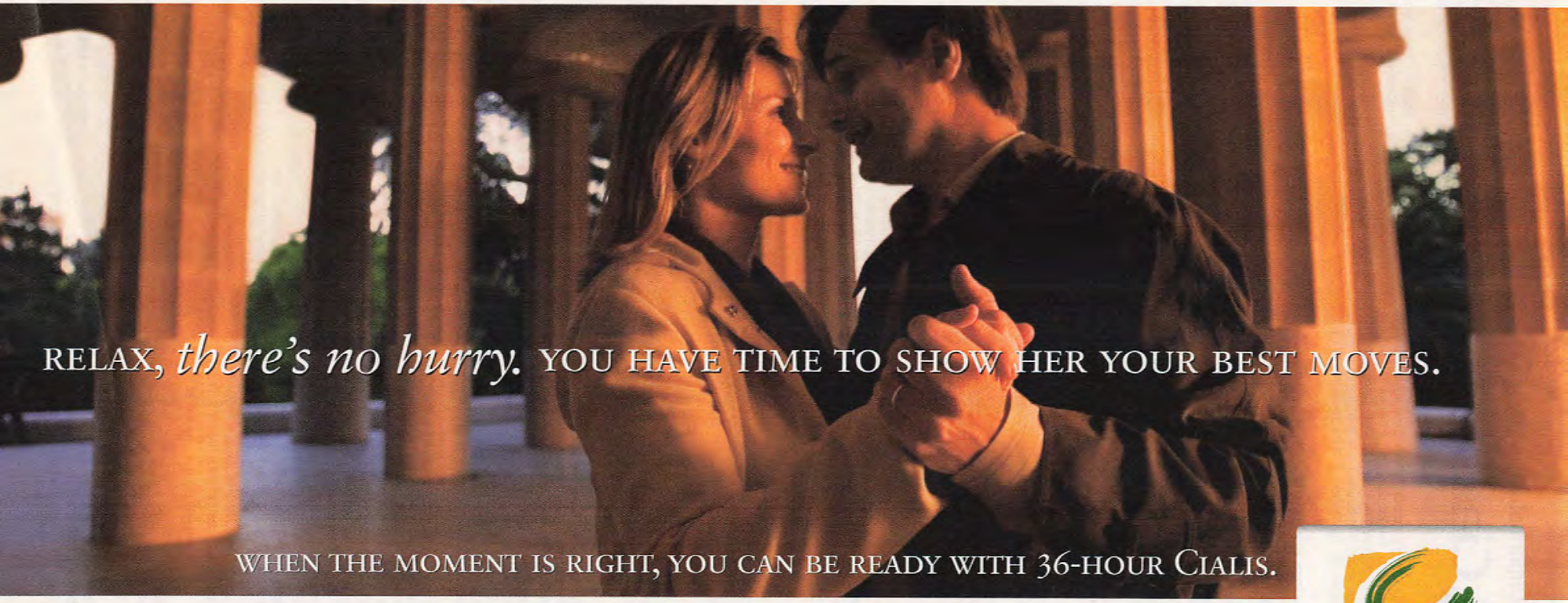
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Cialis (see-AL-iss) is the only erectile dysfunction (ED) tablet clinically proven to both work fast and work for up to 36 hours.* Having up to 36 hours lets you respond to your partner when the moment is right. Men with ED and their partners agree, Cialis improves erectile function for a satisfying experience.

Ask your doctor if prescription Cialis is right for you. See important safety information above and Patient Information on following page.

**Individual results may vary. Not studied for multiple attempts per dose. In clinical trials, Cialis was shown to improve, up to 36 hours after dosing, the ability of men with ED to have a single successful intercourse attempt.*

Cialis®
(tadalafil) tablets
www.cialis.com
1-877-4-CIALIS

Patient Information

Cialis® (tadalafil) tablets

Read the Patient Information about CIALIS before you start taking it and again each time you get a refill. There may be new information. You may also find it helpful to share this information with your partner. This leaflet does not take the place of talking with your doctor. You and your doctor should talk about CIALIS when you start taking it and at regular checkups. If you do not understand the information, or have questions, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.

What important information should you know about CIALIS?

CIALIS can cause your blood pressure to drop suddenly to an unsafe level if it is taken with certain other medicines. You could get dizzy, faint, or have a heart attack or stroke.

Do not take CIALIS if you:

- **take any medicines called "nitrates."**
- **use recreational drugs called "poppers" like amyl nitrate and butyl nitrate.**
- **take medicines called alpha blockers, other than Flomax® (tamsulosin HCl) 0.4 mg daily.**

(See "Who should not take CIALIS?")

Tell all your healthcare providers that you take CIALIS. If you need emergency medical care for a heart problem, it will be important for your healthcare provider to know when you last took CIALIS.

After taking a single tablet, some of the active ingredient of CIALIS remains in your body for more than 2 days. The active ingredient can remain longer if you have problems with your kidneys or liver, or you are taking certain other medications (see "Can other medications affect CIALIS?").

What is CIALIS?

CIALIS is a prescription medicine taken by mouth for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED) in men.

ED is a condition where the penis does not harden and expand when a man is sexually excited, or when he cannot keep an erection. A man who has trouble getting or keeping an erection should see his doctor for help if the condition bothers him. CIALIS may help a man with ED get and keep an erection when he is sexually excited.

CIALIS does not:

- cure ED
- increase a man's sexual desire
- protect a man or his partner from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. Speak to your doctor about ways to guard against sexually transmitted diseases.
- serve as a male form of birth control

CIALIS is only for men with ED. CIALIS is not for women or children. CIALIS must be used only under a doctor's care.

How does CIALIS work?

When a man is sexually stimulated, his body's normal physical response is to increase blood flow to his penis. This results in an erection. CIALIS helps increase blood flow to the penis and may help men with ED get and keep an erection satisfactory for sexual activity. Once a man has completed sexual activity, blood flow to his penis decreases, and his erection goes away.

Who can take CIALIS?

Talk to your doctor to decide if CIALIS is right for you.

CIALIS has been shown to be effective in men over the age of 18 years who have erectile dysfunction, including men with diabetes or who have undergone prostatectomy.

Who should not take CIALIS?

Do **not** take CIALIS if you:

- **take any medicines called "nitrates"** (See "What important information should you know about CIALIS?"). Nitrates are commonly used to treat angina. Angina is a symptom of heart disease and can cause pain in your chest, jaw, or down your arm.

  Medicines called nitrates include nitroglycerin that is found in tablets, sprays, ointments, pastes, or patches. Nitrates can also be found in other medicines such as isosorbide dinitrate or isosorbide mononitrate. Some recreational drugs called "poppers" also contain nitrates, such as amyl nitrate and butyl nitrate. Do not use CIALIS if you are using these drugs. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if any of your medicines are nitrates.
- **take medicines called "alpha blockers", other than Flomax® 0.4 mg daily.** Alpha blockers are sometimes prescribed for prostate problems or high blood pressure. If CIALIS is taken with alpha blockers other than Flomax® 0.4 mg daily, your blood pressure could suddenly drop to an unsafe level. You could get dizzy and faint.
- **you have been told by your healthcare provider to not have sexual activity because of health problems.** Sexual activity can put an extra strain on your heart, especially if your heart is already weak from a heart attack or heart disease.
- **are allergic to CIALIS or any of its ingredients.** The active ingredient in CIALIS is called tadalafil. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.

What should you discuss with your doctor before taking CIALIS?

Before taking CIALIS, tell your doctor about all your medical problems, including if you:

- **have heart problems** such as angina, heart failure, irregular heartbeats, or have had a heart attack. Ask your doctor if it is safe for you to have sexual activity.
- **have low blood pressure or** have high blood pressure that is not controlled
- **have had a stroke**
- **have liver problems**
- **have kidney problems or require dialysis**
- **have retinitis pigmentosa,** a rare genetic (runs in families) eye disease
- **have stomach ulcers**
- **have a bleeding problem**
- **have a deformed penis shape** or Peyronie's disease
- **have had an erection that lasted more than 4 hours**
- **have blood cell problems** such as sickle cell anemia, multiple myeloma, or leukemia

Can other medications affect CIALIS?

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. CIALIS and other medicines may affect each other. Always check with your doctor before starting or stopping any medicines. Especially tell your doctor if you take any of the following:

- medicines called nitrates (See "What important information should you know about CIALIS?")
- medicines called alpha blockers. These include Hytrin® (terazosin HCl), Flomax® (tamsulosin HCl), Cardura® (doxazosin mesylate), Minipress® (prazosin HCl) or Uroxatral® (alfuzosin HCl).
- ritonavir (Norvir®) or indinavir (Crixivan®)
- ketoconazole or itraconazole (such as Nizoral® or Sporanox®)
- erythromycin
- other medicines or treatments for ED

How should you take CIALIS?

Take CIALIS exactly as your doctor prescribes. CIALIS comes in different doses (5 mg, 10 mg, and 20 mg). For most men, the recommended starting dose is 10 mg. **CIALIS should be taken no more than once a day.** Some men can only take a low dose of CIALIS because of medical conditions or medicines they take. Your doctor will prescribe the dose that is right for you.

- If you have kidney problems, your doctor may start you on a lower dose of CIALIS.
- If you have kidney or liver problems or you are taking certain medications, your doctor may limit your highest dose of CIALIS to 10 mg and may also limit you to one tablet in 48 hours (2 days) or one tablet in 72 hours (3 days).

Take one CIALIS tablet before sexual activity. In some patients, the ability to have sexual activity was improved at 30 minutes after taking CIALIS when compared to a sugar pill. The ability to have sexual activity was improved up to 36 hours after taking CIALIS when compared to a sugar pill. You and your doctor should consider this in deciding when you should take CIALIS prior to sexual activity. Some form of sexual stimulation is needed for an erection to happen with CIALIS. CIALIS may be taken with or without meals.

Do not change your dose of CIALIS without talking to your doctor. Your doctor may lower your dose or raise your dose, depending on how your body reacts to CIALIS.

Do not drink alcohol to excess when taking CIALIS (for example, 5 glasses of wine or 5 shots of whiskey). When taken in excess, alcohol can increase your chances of getting a headache or getting dizzy, increasing your heart rate, or lowering your blood pressure.

If you take too much CIALIS, call your doctor or emergency room right away.

What are the possible side effects of CIALIS?

The most common side effects with CIALIS are headache, indigestion, back pain, muscle aches, flushing, and stuffy or runny nose. These side effects usually go away after a few hours. Patients who get back pain and muscle aches usually get it 12 to 24 hours after taking CIALIS. Back pain and muscle aches usually go away by themselves within 48 hours. Call your doctor if you get a side effect that bothers you or one that will not go away.

CIALIS may uncommonly cause:

- **an erection that won't go away (priapism).** If you get an erection that lasts more than 4 hours, get medical help right away. Priapism must be treated as soon as possible or lasting damage can happen to your penis including the inability to have erections.
- vision changes, such as seeing a blue tinge to objects or having difficulty telling the difference between the colors blue and green.

These are not all the side effects of CIALIS. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

How should CIALIS be stored?

- Store CIALIS at room temperature between 59° and 86°F (15° and 30°C).
- **Keep CIALIS and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

General Information about CIALIS:

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions other than those described in patient information leaflets. Do not use CIALIS for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give CIALIS to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about CIALIS. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about CIALIS that is written for health professionals.

For more information you can also visit www.cialis.com, or call 1-877-242-5471.

What are the ingredients of CIALIS?

Active Ingredient: tadalafil

Inactive Ingredients: croscarmellose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hypromellose, iron oxide, lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, sodium lauryl sulfate, talc, titanium dioxide, and triacetin.

Rx only

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The Beat

By Lisa Altobelli

PICTURE THIS Image is everything in Los Angeles, and beginning this week the city celebrates its rich athletic history with Play by Play: A Century of Sports Photography, 1889–1989. The exhibit, which runs through March 27 at the L.A. Central Library, features more than 200 photos, including classic shots of Jack (with Faye Dunaway in 1985) holding court at a Lakers game and O.J.'s dash with the '84 Olympic torch.

HE RENTED a yacht named *Privacy*, but just in case that didn't afford **Tiger Woods** the seclusion he desired at his wedding last week at the Sandy Lane resort in Barbados, there were droves of camouflage-wearing security guards hiding in the bushes. The sunset ceremony, at which Woods, 28, married model **Elin Nordegren**, 24, was the highlight of a five-day bash that included golf, fireworks and **Hootie & the Blowfish**, who played at the reception. Among the guests: **Charles Barkley** and **Michael Jordan**, as well as Tour players **Mark O'Meara** and **John Cook**. "It was very understated and very elegant, just like Tiger," says Cook. "People had a really good time. There was a lot of dancing [at the reception]. It went on until about 11:30. Everyone was pretty roasted—by the sun and in every other way—by the time we were through."

■ Redskins quarterback **Tim Hasselbeck**, 26, and his television-personality wife, **Elisabeth** *(right)*—who met at Boston College, where he played football and she played softball—have an eaglet on the way. The couple is expecting a baby this spring. With her husband in D.C., *The View* cohost (who is based in New York) was forced to wait two weeks to share the news. "I didn't want to tell him any other way than in person," Elisabeth, 27, said. "It was a hard two weeks, but I've never seen him so shocked." She announced her pregnancy to the world when she and her four cohosts appeared on *The View* eating junk food and wearing fake big bellies.

■ Is Abercrombie & Fitch purposely out of step with the Olympic spirit? Hard to tell, but the retail chain has been selling T-shirts that feature a gymnast on the rings contorting his body into the shape of an L above the phrase L IS FOR LOSER. Predictably, this has raised the dander of gymnastics aficionados. "No individual, regardless of race, gender, age, intelligence or athletic ability, can or should be deemed a loser," USA Gymnastics president **Bob Colarossi** wrote in a letter to A&F. "Athletics as a whole, and gymnastics in particular, provides a great foundation in physical fitness and offers skills for a lifetime." USA Gymnastics has asked its members to boycott the store until the shirt is pulled. Abercrombie & Fitch has yet to decide whether it will remove the offending item from its line. . . . Unlike the man he aspires to be (**Donald Trump**), bow-tied *Apprentice* contestant **Raj Bhakta** doesn't appear to have a way with glamorous ladies. As the reward for winning a challenge on *The Apprentice*, the men's team went to the National Tennis Center in Queens to hit a few balls with **Anna Kournikova** and **John McEnroe**. Raj, 28, boldly asked Kournikova out—even though she's been with singer **Enrique Iglesias** for two years. Anna gamely agreed to coffee if Raj could return one of her five serves. Alas, he flailed and missed all five, complaining, "There's a spin on them. These are like **Bill Clinton** serves." For losing the dare, Raj jogged around Arthur Ashe Stadium in his boxers while McEnroe, Kournikova and the rest of his team drilled tennis balls at him.

THIS WEEK'S SIGN OF THE **APOCALYPSE**

A 5' 9" man from Hong Kong who wanted to be an **NBA player** paid two beauty salons $2,600 to make him taller.

They Said It

JUAN RINCON Twins pitcher, after giving up four runs in a third of an inning in Minnesota's 6–5 loss to the Yankees in Game 4 of the American League Division Series: "Nobody wants to be in my pants right now."

JAMES RUEBSAMEN/L.A. PUBLIC LIBRARY PHOTO COLLECTION (NICHOLSON AND DUNAWAY); JAVIER MENDOZA/L.A. PUBLIC LIBRARY PHOTO COLLECTION (SIMPSON); JONATHAN DANIEL/GETTY IMAGES (RINCON); JAMES DEVANEY/WIREIMAGE.COM (HASSELBECK)

The Week Ahead

What to watch and watch for **By Julia Morrill**

FRIDAY 15

Midnight Madness | College hoops fans, the wait is over. Teams can—and will—start practice at the stroke of midnight. ***Real Training Camp*** **NBATV 6:30 p.m.** | Go backstage with the Hornets, as new coach Byron Scott tries to deal with dissatisfied All-Star Baron Davis.

SATURDAY 16

Navy vs. Notre Dame CBS Noon | The last time the Middies beat the Irish, in 1963, Roger Staubach was their QB. **Wisconsin at Purdue ESPN2 5:30 p.m.** | The Boilermakers, led by QB Kyle Orton, have the No. 3 offense in the country; the Badgers have the top-ranked D.

SUNDAY 17

MetroStars at D.C. United ESPN2 5 p.m. | Phenom Freddy Adu, who is third on United with five goals, wraps up his rookie season. **Panthers at Eagles FOX 1 p.m.** | Philly QB Donovan McNabb will be hungry for revenge in a rematch of last season's NFC title game.

MONDAY 18

Buccaneers at Rams ABC 9 p.m. | Why is Jon Gruden scowling even more than usual? The maligned Tampa Bay coach is 1–4, and tonight he faces an offense that put 23 points on the board in the final 8:36 on Sunday to hand Seattle its first loss of the season.

TUESDAY 19

Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel **HBO 10 p.m.** | The first of a two-part feature on the oldest sport in the Middle East: camel racing. The 1,500-pound beasts are ridden by child jockeys, who are traded like slaves and subjected to torture and starvation.

WEDNESDAY 20

Happy Birthday! | Former defensive lineman Lee Roy Selmon turns 50. The only Buccaneer in the Hall of Fame recently stepped down as AD at South Florida. ***Late Show with David Letterman*** **CBS 11:35 p.m.** | IRL champ Tony Kanaan talks about winning the title.

THURSDAY 21

Warriors at Lakers FSW 10:30 p.m. | Derek Fisher, who played in L.A. for eight years, faces former teammate Kobe Bryant in a preseason matchup. Last week Kobe said of the new-look Lakers, "This is my team to lead. Shaq was the focal point. . . . Now it's different."

Under Review

When heavyweight Max Schmeling, a German whose prowess made him the darling of Berlin's café society, entered the ring at Yankee Stadium on June 19, 1936, to fight Joe Louis, few thought the fight would be competitive. Schmeling, 30, was eight years Louis's senior and, says Courtney B. Vance, the narrator of *The Fight* (PBS, Oct. 18), "on the downward slope of a checkered career." Louis was "undefeated—a combination of speed, power and aggression, a near perfect fighter." But Schmeling had noticed that after Lewis snapped a jab, the American's left hand came down to his waist rather than up to his face, and Schmeling exploited this flaw to knock Louis out in the 12th round. Yet when they met again, in 1938 at Yankee Stadium (with Schmeling now reviled in the U.S. as a pawn of Hitler and President Roosevelt saying of Louis, "These are the muscles we need to defeat the Germans"), Louis rose to the occasion and knocked out Schmeling in just more than two minutes. Though they were touted as the personifications of diametrically opposed ideologies, in later years the two men became friends of a sort; in 1981 Schmeling helped pay for Louis's funeral. With rich archival footage and lively interviews, *The Fight* serves its fascinating subjects well.

—Nancy Ramsey

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Trivial Matters

By David Sabino

Great Scottie

Leader Board Last week six-time NBA champion and two-time Olympic gold medalist Scottie Pippen announced his retirement. In only one season during his 17-year career did Pippen lead the NBA in a major statistical category. What category was it?

a. Assists per game
b. Points per game
c. Steals per game
d. Three-point field goal percentage

Second Fiddle For most of Michael Jordan's career with Chicago, Pippen served as the team's second scoring option. Who was the only Bulls player other than Pippen to finish second on the team in scoring average when Pippen and Jordan were on the team?

This Week's Matchup In 1987, before being traded to the Bulls, Pippen was drafted by the SuperSonics out of Central Arkansas, an NAIA school. Can you match these other NBA stars with the NAIA schools they attended?

1. Elgin Baylor	**a. Guilford College**
2. Lloyd Free	**b. College of Idaho**
3. Dennis Rodman	**c. Illinois Wesleyan**
4. Jack Sikma	**d. SE Oklahoma State**

Call to Order Pippen was named to the All-NBA first, second or third team seven times. Put these greats in order of the number of times they were named to the first team.

a. Charles Barkley **c. Scottie Pippen**
b. Walt Frazier **d. John Stockton**

>ANSWERS

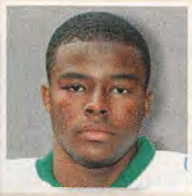
LEADER BOARD: c. Pippen led the NBA with 2.94 steals per game during the 1994–95 season. He is the career leader in three-point field goal attempts in the postseason (640), the NBA Finals (117) and the All-Star Game (22).

SECOND FIDDLE: Forward Charles Oakley was second in 1987–88, Pippen's rookie season. That year Pippen was sixth on the team with 7.9 points per game.

THIS WEEK'S MATCHUP: 1. b; 2. a; 3. d; 4. c

CALL TO ORDER: a. Barkley (five times); b. Frazier (four); c. Pippen (three); d. Stockton (two)

Faces in the Crowd



Javon Ringer

DAYTON > Football

Javon, a senior running back at Chaminade-Julienne High, rushed for a career-best 372 yards and scored five touchdowns in a 42–12 win over Purcell-Marian. He has 1,763 yards and 22 touchdowns for the season and is on pace for his third 2,000-yard season.

Kendyl Washburn

MIDLAND, TEXAS > Soccer

Washburn, a freshman forward at Harding, scored a school-record seven game-winning goals in the season's first 10 games. She has eight goals and four assists for 20 points, helping the Lady Bisons to a 11-2-1 start.

Jennifer Gandolph

GREENWOOD, IND. > Volleyball

Gandolph, a senior outside hitter at Michigan, had 12 digs and 16 kills in a win over Purdue, bringing her career kills to a school-record 1,385. She has three straight double double (kills and digs) matches for the 14–3 Wolverines and is their alltime leader in attempts and digs.

Brent Egbert

BELLINGHAM, WASH. > Soccer

Egbert, a senior midfielder at Seattle Pacific, scored two goals in a 3–2 victory over Humboldt State, extending his point-scoring streak to nine games through Oct. 2. He leads the 9-2-1 Falcons with 11 goals, five assists and 27 points for the season.

Kelsie Passolt

HAYWARD, WIS. > Golf

Kelsie, a freshman at Hayward High, led the Hurricanes to the Heart O'North Conference co-championship, was first on the all-conference team with 89 points and was named its player of the year. In July she won the girls' state Junior PGA 14-and-under title.

Gregory Harper

WALNUT CREEK, CALIF. > Triathlon

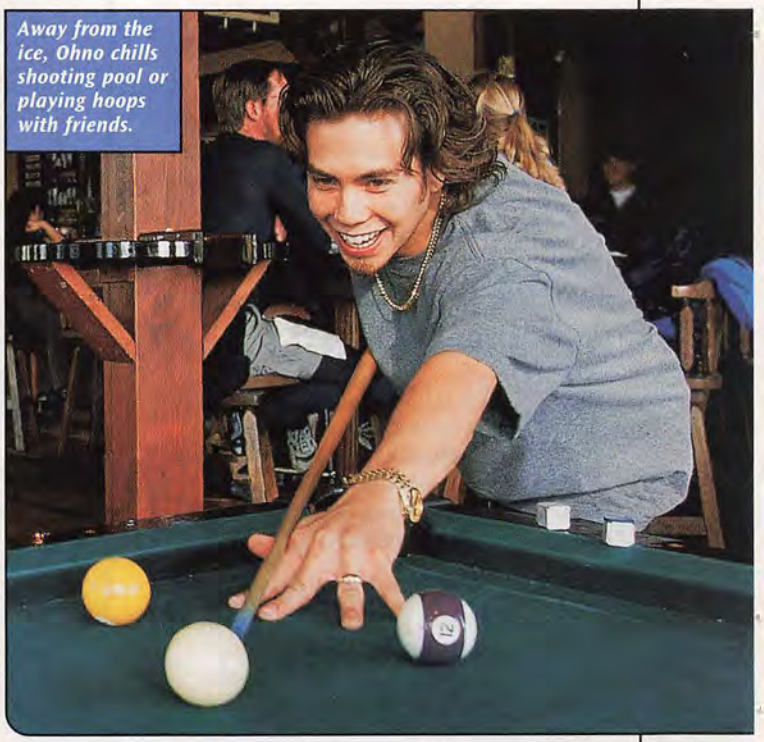
Gregory, a seventh-grader at Walnut Creek Intermediate, won a third age-group triathlon title (200-meter swim, 6.2-mile bike ride, 1.2-mile run) at the IronKids national championships. He also set USA Pacific records in the 200-meter butterfly and 1,500-meter freestyle.

To submit a candidate for Faces in the Crowd, go to **SI.com/faces.**

FROM TOP: EASTERLING STUDIOS; JEFF MONTGOMERY; MARTIN VLOET; JOANIE KADMURA; RICK MCNITT; CLAY MCLACHLAN

Hangin' With Apolo Ohno

WHEN YOU THINK SEATTLE, you think grunge. Just don't tie Apolo Ohno to that stereotype. The Emerald City native, who won 2002 Olympic gold and silver in short-track speed skating, doesn't go in for flannel, guitars and growling vocals. "No grunge for me," he says. "I never had those kind of friends growing up." Though he lives in a Colorado Springs dorm room these days while training, the 21-year-old heads home when he can, hitting restaurants with his dad, Yuki, and absorbing the maritime splendor. "I love it. It just feels good," he says. "It's a beautiful, beautiful city."



Away from the ice, Ohno chills shooting pool or playing hoops with friends.

So your dad's still there? He actually just got a brand-new house overlooking Puget Sound. He gets up every morning with a smile on his face. He's given me so much throughout my career, I just feel like I want to do everything for him now. **Still running his hair salon?** Yeah, he's still doing his thing. He drives me crazy, I drive him crazy, but it's great. Our relationship is awesome. **When you set up your own place someday, what do you imagine?** Somewhere with a view of the water. Japanese/modern influence with a very comfortable feel. **Any cool toys?** I'd own a nice pool table. We play when we go out in Colorado Springs, but living in the dorms, it's not as much as I'd like. And of course I love cars! I'd definitely have a huge garage.

What is it with young guys and cars? Something about them. If I'm just out relaxing with my buddies, if a certain car drives by, I can't help but check it out. I like seeing nice cars modified. Celebrities with their cars, sports guys with their cars. **You mean in magazines, on TV?** Yeah. There aren't too many guys rolling through Colorado Springs, souping Apolo Ohno up. That would be nice *(laughs)*. Holler at your boy, "Soup me up!" **What do you drive?** I drive Lexuses. That's my thing. A big Lexus SUV. I got the whole deal, it's all hooked up. **Why Lexus?** I like speed and power. Like when a car comes out, if it's got style, if it's got power, I think that's really hot, you know? It's such a guy thing.

The World Cup circuit, which starts next month, keeps you globetrotting. Favorite places you've been? I love Italy. I love Japan. And China's out of this world, man. **Ever visit your dad's family in Japan?** I went there when I turned 20. Being at my grandparents' was amazing. I felt like a whole new person—like I'd aged 30 years but my body felt 10 years old. **What did you guys do?** My dad and I went to a lot of hot springs, just relaxed. Walked steps to a temple. Saw where a tree was planted so many years ago, the people believe in the power of the tree supplying the town with this energy. Just amazing to see kinda my roots. **Does your family know about your speed skating exploits?** Yeah, they're proud of me. My grandpa really wants me to make the Ohno name proud and honorable.

Any sports stars you admire? I've always had my eye on certain athletes, the star athletes. Everybody does. From Lance Armstrong to Muhammad Ali, I was interested in what made them so great. They're mentally tough. **Yeah, cyclists must go crazy watching Armstrong train.** *(Laughs)* Yep. That's the beauty of sports. You are your own worst enemy. **Do you play anything for fun?** Basketball. I have a couple friends who play professional badminton. I really like it all. I love everything sports stand for.

THE A Lists

FAVORITE SPORTS MOVIES

"I'm a fan of sports movies. The struggle of being an athlete and finally having success, reaching your goals."

- ***Price of Glory*** **(boxing)**
- ***Rocky*** **(boxing)**
- ***For Love of the Game*** **(baseball)**
- ***Miracle*** **(hockey)**
- ***When We Were Kings*** **(boxing)**

"Anytime anything about Ali is on, I'm watching."

FAVORITE MUSIC

"I listen to mostly hip-hop and R&B. I grew up on the West Coast, so there's a lot of underground guys I listen to. But I like a lot of East Coast music, a lot of mainstream R&B."

- **Kanye West**
- **Keith Sweat**
- **The Isley Brothers**

"My dad actually likes The Isley Brothers. I was like, 'Dad, what's going on? You don't know who these people are.' He's like, 'They were singing way before you were born.' "

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Now on SI.com

With the national rankings up for grabs, college football heads for another explosive weekend

Stewart Mandel's Top Five Reset

1 OKLAHOMA (5–0)
If he played basketball, **Adrian Peterson** (who had 225 yards in a 12–0 win over Texas) would be toiling for some hapless lottery team. Instead, the most gifted freshman running back since **Herschel Walker** is playing in the same backfield as a Heisman-winning QB.
Next game: Saturday at Kansas State

2 USC (5–0)
The receiving corps is decimated, and the secondary is struggling. But if USC was able to survive Cal QB **Aaron Rodgers**, it should be able to survive just about anyone.
Next game: Saturday vs. Arizona State

3 AUBURN (6–0)
The Tigers may be the SEC's last remaining national championship hope. It won't be easy, as Auburn finishes the season with Georgia, Alabama (in Tuscaloosa) and the SEC title game.
Next game: Saturday vs. Arkansas

4 PURDUE (5–0)
The Boilermakers have made a lot of history lately. They're 5–0 for the first time since 1945; last Saturday they won at Penn State for the first time, and **Taylor Stubblefield** broke the Big Ten career record with 271 catches.
Next game: Saturday vs. Wisconsin

5 MIAMI (4–0)
The Hurricanes' D, led by junior cornerback **Antrel Rolle** *(right)*, has dominated, allowing just 6.5 points and 216 yards per game. But it faces a significant challenge against a highly balanced Louisville offense that's generating more than 500 yards per game.
Next game: Thursday vs. Louisville

JC RIDLEY/WIREIMAGE.COM (ROLLE)

The Poll Position

Which undefeated team is most likely to run the table?

○ Oklahoma ○ USC
○ Auburn ○ Purdue
○ Miami

Vote at **si.com/football/ncaa.**
Watch for the results here next week.

Last issue's poll: We asked which team was most likely to pull a Division Series upset. Here are the results: Red Sox (41%), Astros (29%), Twins (24%) and Dodgers (6%).

Stewart Mandel's complete College Football Power Rankings and his Mailbag appear every Tuesday at si.com/football/ncaa.

SI.com Web Insiders

MON.	SI's **Gary Van Sickle** contributes his Underground Golfer column, and tennis writer **Jon Wertheim** answers your questions in his Mailbag.
TUE.	For those who wanted more of **Peter King's** Monday Morning Quarterback: The NFL expert now has a Tuesday edition of his column.
WED.	SI baseball writer **Tom Verducci** fields hot questions from his Mailbag, while **Dr. Z** offers his weekly NFL Power Rankings.
THU.	**Peter King** and **Don Banks** debate a pressing NFL issue in Head2Head, while football writer **Josh Elliott** riffs on the headlines in his Daily Blog.
FRI.	Fantasy sports guru **David Sabino** gives tips in his Fantasy Insider, and **Richard Deitsch** tackles pressing issues in his Media Circus column.

For complete playoff coverage, go to **si.com/baseball.**

Pull any other great ones out of the bag?

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SKECHERS

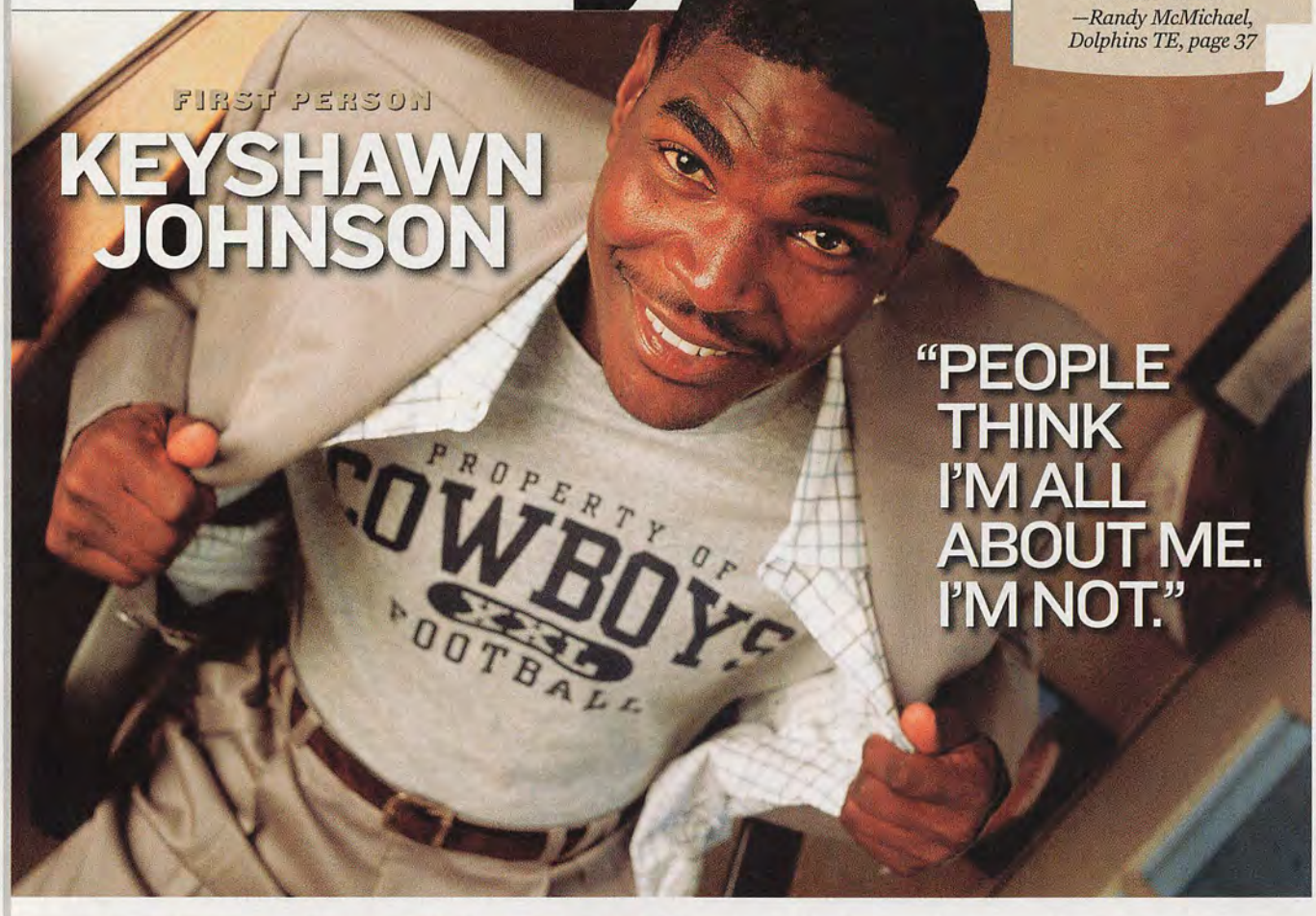
SI Players

Edited by
KOSTYA KENNEDY

"My first game Jay Fiedler threw a ball that hit me right in the face."
—Randy McMichael, Dolphins TE, page 37

FIRST PERSON

KEYSHAWN JOHNSON



"PEOPLE THINK I'M ALL ABOUT ME. I'M NOT."

"• **ON WHETHER HE CAN RETURN TO PRO BOWL FORM WITH DALLAS** Return? I never left. I'm always gonna catch 80 balls. The reason I didn't catch 80 last year [he had 45] is because the game was taken from me by a coach [Jon Gruden] who made football depressing.

• **ON TAMPA BAY** It's sad. Just sad. I have friends trapped on that team, suffering in silence, suffering inside, because they can't say anything about how bad it is there. They have to feed their families.

• **ON FEELINGS OF REVENGE TOWARD THE BUCS AND GRUDEN** The revenge for me was when they didn't make the playoffs last year. That said it all.

• **ON WHY HE MESHES SO WELL WITH BILL PARCELLS** He gets it. I get it. That's it. He tells me, 'This is what I want you to do for me.' And if I do that for him, he'll do things for me. It's a simple relationship. It's the way every football relationship should be. No nonsense.

• **ON HIS VALUE AS A FOOTBALL PLAYER** Do you know how valuable it is to have a player who can go in motion, double-down on the defensive end [be part of a double-team block], release from that and go take out the middle linebacker? That is a weapon in this game. That's what I do. Plus I catch 80 balls for 1,200 yards. That is value.

• **ON THE QB HE WISHES HE COULD PLAY WITH BEFORE HE RETIRES** Tom Brady. He has guts, courage. He's unselfish. Overcame a lot of obstacles. Came from nowhere. And all he does is win. Peyton Manning's good, but he gets too much credit. Look at the weapons he's got versus the weapons Brady's got. And come on . . . win a playoff game when it counts. Win when it's time to deliver. Beating a defense like Kansas City's . . . I mean, that doesn't count. Brady wins the huge games.

• **ON THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD THING ABOUT KEYSHAWN JOHNSON** That I'm all about me. I'm not. All I want to do is play well and help the team win.

• **ON JERRY JONES** Some owners just write checks. Jerry Jones writes checks to win.

• **ON THE CORNERBACK WHO HAS THE BEST CHANCE OF NEUTRALIZING HIM ON SUNDAYS** To be honest with you, nobody.

—As told to Peter King"

JOHNSON CAUGHT A TD PASS IN THE COWBOYS' LOSS TO THE GIANTS (PAGE 84). DALLAS (2–2) PLAYS PITTSBURGH THIS SUNDAY

DANNY TURNER (JOHNSON); JOSH MERWIN/GETTY IMAGES (MCMICHAEL)

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THE WIRE
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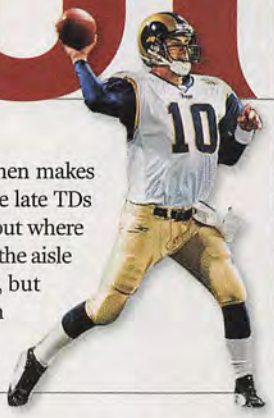
WHO'S Hot



Marc Bulger

Rams QB attends presidential debate, then makes statement of his own: throwing for three late TDs to rally Rams to win. Bulger was coy about where he sat at the debate ("on the right side of the aisle . . . that could mean the correct side"), but receiver Shaun McDonald was frank in giving Bulger the endorsement every pol wants: "He's just a leader."

Sirius

Satellite radio system that has football deities John Madden and Tom Brady pitching its NFL package lands Howard Stern, who'll bring his locker-room language out of the reach of the FCC.

Caretaker Quarterbacks

The Chargers' Drew Brees and the Giants' Kurt Warner were only expected to keep their pockets warm for young guns Philip Rivers and Eli Manning. Now they're a combined 7–3, Brees is coming off a two-TD day, and the kids are on the sidelines taking notes.

Daunte Culpepper

Feelin' blue about the Twins' getting bounced and the Gophers' losing to Michigan? Culpepper's five-touchdown day, including a bomb to win in OT, is the cure. Sprint even has a new cellphone "ring"—Culpepper's voice saying, "Pick up your phone, it's game time, baby."

Celebrity Justice

Jamal Lewis had his four-month jail term delayed until the off-season and ran for 116 yards; Braves shortstop Rafael Furcal had his 21-day stint delayed until the off-season and hit a game-winning homer; and Martha Stewart, who couldn't wait to get her five months started, took her first stroll in prison-issued slacks.

WHO'S Not

Saints

Nawlins sure is a neat place to visit *(page 41)*—especially if you're an NFL team. Saints are now 1–2 at home, fresh off a shouting match between DE Charles Grant and QB Aaron Brooks, and have lost two in a row to previously winless teams. Knowing that they handed the Bucs their first W, says center LeCharles Bentley, "is hurtful."

Rested Seahawks

After week off Seattle entered Sunday's game vs. Rams "refreshed and recharged" in words of QB Matt Hasselbeck. But up by 17 in the fourth, they collapsed, ruining a potential battle of unbeatens with the Pats this week. Seattle has never won after a bye under Mike Holmgren.

Texas

Newly shorn QB David Carr's comeback fell short against the Vikings. The Cowboys got whupped by the rival Giants, the Longhorns got blanked in the Cotton Bowl, and baseball's Rangers watched as A-Rod, the shortstop who couldn't carry them to the playoffs, led the Yankees into the AL Championship Series.

Dolphins

You kidding us? Jilted by their star tailback, buffeted by hurricanes, decimated by injuries and dogged by oddsmakers who have Dave Wannstedt at 2–1 to be fired, the NFL's only 0–5 team could have its league-high streak of 15 nonlosing seasons ended by early November.

Intelligence

Bill Parcells says his team does "dumb things," but for real density consider Panthers tackle Matt Willig, who late in game vs. Broncos picked up a penalty flag and threw it—drawing a 15-yard penalty that took Carolina out of field goal range, forcing it to punt. Denver ran out the clock in a 20–17 win. The Broncos' Kenoy Kennedy: "[Willig] will probably be on the waiver wire. That was a boneheaded play."

SI PLAYERS POLL

(Based on a survey of 354 players)

For complete results and a breakdown of the poll, go to si.com/scorecard.

Who Is the Dirtiest Player in the NFL?

<< **Rodney Harrison** **15%**
Safety, Patriots

Hines Ward 9%
Wide receiver, Steelers

Jon Runyan 8%
Tackle, Eagles

Dan Neil 8%
Guard, Broncos

FAST FACTS Harrison, who spent nine seasons with San Diego before joining the Pats in 2003, has incurred more than $300,000 in fines, including $7,500 for a late hit on Arizona QB Josh McCown in Week 2. He was an All-Pro last year. . . . In 2001 Neil drew a $15,000 fine for clipping LB Bryan Cox, a play on which Cox broke his leg.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JEFF GROSS/GETTY IMAGES; DILIP VISHWANAT/SPORTPICS; ABACA; ROBERT BECK; ALLEN KEE/WIREIMAGE.COM; EVAN AGOSTINI/GETTY IMAGES

OCTOBER FORECAST: CONTINUED REIGN.

Through August '04, we were selling one truck every 35 seconds.
In September, we cut 9 seconds off our time – 99,720 new trucks in 30 days.
That's 22% better than our previous record.

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- Sept. '04 – Best September sales ever.
- All-time sales record for first 9 months. Jan. 1, '04 – Sept. 30, '04. Yeah baby.
- Increased our sales lead over Chevy Silverado by 55% CYTD. Tough luck.

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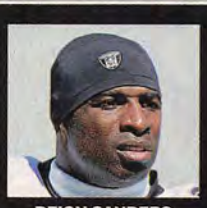
. . . IN ANOTHER SPORT

JEREMY SHOCKEY
GIANTS TIGHT END

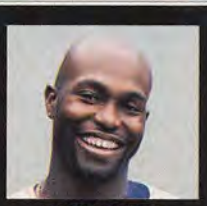
DAVID WELLS
PADRES PITCHER

'TWAS AT the 2003 Super Bowl in San Diego that the 6′ 5″, 252-pound Shockey first frolicked with the 6′ 3″, 248-pound Wells. "We were introduced by the drummer with P.O.D.," says Wells. "We went to the Bitter End and Martini Ranch, hanging out with a group." The bar crawl launched a deep friendship. "We got to talking, and it was weird how two people can connect that easy," says Wells, 41. "He's a crazy dude, awesome—a clone of me." Shockey, 24, admires the quieter side of Wells, who is married with two kids. "He's a family man. Everybody has this opinion of him as a partyer, and we do go to clubs and have a good time," says Shockey, "but mostly we hang out and talk. You have to put yourself around successful people."

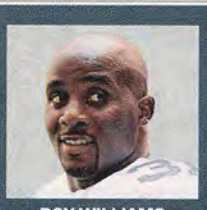


DEION SANDERS
RAVENS CORNERBACK

A GAME of one-on-one is just 20 minutes away for these two. The Twins' Gold Glove centerfielder got to know Sanders on the baseball diamond during Deion's years as an outfielder, and now they're practically neighbors, living 15 miles apart in the Dallas–Fort Worth area. The two talk every few weeks, and when they're both in their off-seasons, they often get together to play hoops or work out. Hunter, whose season ended last Saturday when the Twins lost to the Yankees in the AL playoffs, is building a house on land he found through Sanders. Says Deion, "The wives are close, the kids are close, we're close. He's family."



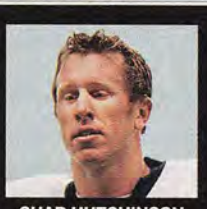
TORII HUNTER
TWINS OUTFIELDER



ROY WILLIAMS
COWBOYS SAFETY

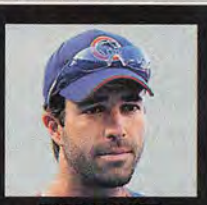
WILLIAMS WAS introduced to Adu at IMG Academies in Florida three years ago when the soccer phenom was 12 and the NFL star 21. Trevor Moawad, a director at IMG, asked Williams to be Adu's mentor. "Freddy really connected with Roy, and Roy was a positive influence," says Moawad. "Roy made smart choices off the field and was a consummate professional." Says Adu, "He reminded me of myself because he always had a big smile on his face." The relationship has continued, with the two talking by phone, swapping highlight reels and attending each other's games—Adu was there to pull for his buddy when the Cowboys won in D.C. on Sept. 27.

FREDDY ADU
D.C. UNITED FORWARD



CHAD HUTCHINSON
BEARS QUARTERBACK

THEY MET in 2001, when Walker was with the Rockies and Hutchinson was a Cardinals pitcher. In February, Hutchinson will marry Walker's sister Lindsey. The guys helped each other through tough times: Hutchinson's being cut by Dallas in July and the Cubs' late-season collapse. "I spent the whole afternoon with him after the [Cubs were eliminated]," says Hutchinson. "They have two little kids I adore. He talks to me about baseball. I know what he goes through because I played." Walker was thrilled the Bears signed Hutchinson last month. "It worked out terrific," he says. "Chad just needs a chance." *—Friends reporter: Sarah Thurmond*



TODD WALKER
CUBS SECOND BASEMAN

MICHAEL J. LEBRECHT II/IDEUCE3 (SHOCKEY); MICHAEL ZITO/SPORTSCHROME (WELLS); JOHN BIEVER/SI (HUNTER); TONY QUINN/WIREIMAGE.COM (ADU); KIRBY LEE/WIREIMAGE.COM (WALKER); ROBERT LEITER/ICON SMI (THOMAS); CORBIS (TY); EA SPORTS (GAME); PIERRE DUCHARME/REUTERS (GRAMATICA); RONALD MARTINEZ/GETTY IMAGES (HUTCHINSON); KARL WRIGHT/ICON SMI (WILLIAMS); CAPPY JACKSON/WIREIMAGE.COM (SANDERS)

Video Matchup

Who'll win on Monday night? In a preview Rams LB Robert Thomas and Bucs K Martin Gramatica played EA Sports Madden 2005 *on Xbox Live.*

IT DIDN'T take long for Thomas, bearing down in his St. Louis hotel room, to begin calling his shots. After the Rams' first possession led nowhere, Thomas punted, and as the ball was about to land in Dwight Smith's arms, Thomas warned, "You better fair catch that!" John Madden had barely shouted "Boom!" when Smith got drilled, losing the ball. The Rams recovered, and a few plays later Marc Bulger threw a TD pass to Torry Holt for a 7–0 lead.

It soon became clear that as a videogamesman, the kicker was no All-Pro. Thomas employed St. Louis's 6′ 3″, 261-pound defensive end Leonard Little to create havoc as he continued to make dead-on predictions.

<< MARTIN GRAMATICA, *BUCCANEERS KICKER*

RAMS *vs.* BUCCANEERS

"Watch out for this guy!" Thomas cautioned before a Little sack. Gramatica, a native of Buenos Aires who wore a Boca Juniors jersey as he played in a Tampa airport hotel, had fallen behind 14–0 at halftime. "You know you're really playing a five-year-old, and I'm just cheering him on," he told Thomas. Not even the midgame arrival of Gramatica's brother Santiago, a kicker for South Florida, improved the Bucs' fortunes. Thomas, behind a 48-yard TD run by Marshall Faulk, went up 30–0. Gramatica joked, "You know FIFA is really my game," and though he scored a late TD, his only solace came afterward, when he tucked into a room-service club sandwich and fruit. **RAMS 30, BUCS 7**

The winner of SI Players' weekly Video Matchup has gone 2–2 on Monday nights.

ROBERT THOMAS, *RAMS LINEBACKER* **>>**

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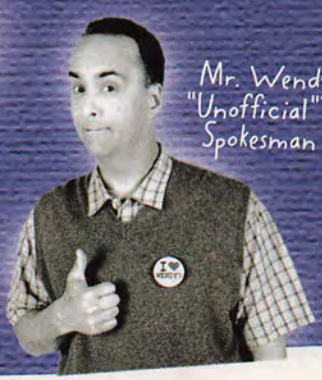

Mr. Wendy, "Unofficial" Spokesman

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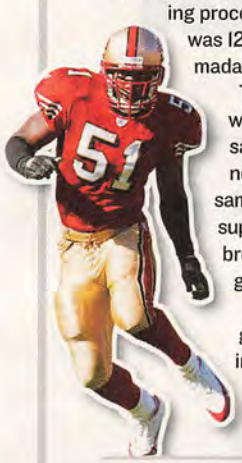
• MY BODY

Fasting and Playing



SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS linebacker Saleem Rasheed is a devout Muslim—he prays five times each day—and with the holy month of Ramadan starting on Oct. 15, he is about to go four weeks without food or water during daylight hours. "It's a cleansing process," says Rasheed, 23, who has fasted during Ramadan since he was 12 and living in Birmingham. "I never feel better than I do during Ramadan because I'm focused. It teaches me self-restraint and discipline."

The 6′ 2″, 229-pound Rasheed, in his third year out of Alabama, deals with the fasting by waking at 4:45 a.m. to eat protein-rich meals (eggs, sausage, pancakes) before dawn and having meat-and potatoes dinners after sundown. ("I have to be smart about my health, but at the same time I live within the etiquette," he says. "During Ramadan you are supposed to eat as if you weren't fasting.") To guard against dehydration—there are no Gatorade breaks for him when the defense comes off—he "starts drinking water as soon as the sun goes down, and I'll keep drinking throughout the night even if I'm not thirsty."

Rasheed says fasting has never hindered his performance—but he does appreciate night games during Ramadan, such as the 49ers' 7:30 p.m. Oct. 31 game against the Bears, during which he'll drink all he needs. "The coaches just ask me to be smart and do everything I can to keep myself healthy," says Rasheed of his fasting. "They've all really respected my religious beliefs."

—Amanda Cherrin

• POLITICAL FOOTBALL

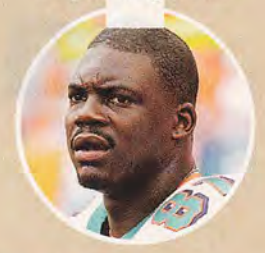
Taking It to the House

. . . or the Senate or the governor's mansion. Would you vote for men who wear skintight pants and dance in the end zone? *By Andrew Lawrence*

	LENNIE FRIEDMAN *Redskins* 28-year-old offensive lineman	**BRANDON SHORT** *Panthers* 27-year-old linebacker	**ROMAN OBEN** *Chargers* 32-year-old offensive tackle
EXPERIENCE	Last summer, interned as a page on Capitol Hill for Rep. Scott Garrett (R., N.J.).	Driving force behind, and frequent public stumper for, NFL voter registration initiative that encourages players and fans to vote.	Interned with Reps. Bill Pascrell (D., N.J.) and Dennis Kucinich (D., Ohio); has master's degree in public administration from Fairleigh Dickinson.
WHAT I'D RUN FOR	U.S. Congress, Raleigh, N.C. "You can get a lot done on both the national and local level."	U.S. Senate, either in North Carolina or his native Pennsylvania.	Governor of New Jersey. "I think I could do a better job than the guy who's there."
FAVORITE LEGAL LANDMARK	Bill of Rights. "It's what separates America from everyone else."	14th Amendment, granting citizenship and protecting civil liberties of freed slaves.	*Brown v. Board of Education*
TRUTH ABOUT POLITICS	"You go in with great ideas, and somewhere along the way those ideas get convoluted."	"You have to watch your facial expressions because as a politician you always have to be on."	"You can get invited to a banquet twice a week for the rest of your life."
MOST POLITICAL ASPECT OF FOOTBALL	Interacting with the press. "There's no question you're a public figure. You've got to be able to handle yourself in the appropriate manner."	Pro Bowl balloting. "You end up voting for the people who have the commercials or somebody you see on ESPN."	The hiring of "good-looking coaches. Good football minds like Romeo Crennel, Ted Cottrell, Charlie Weis—the guys who look boring—just aren't getting hired."

The Questions with Randy McMichael

Dolphins Tight End



What was your welcome-to-the-NFL moment? "When I arrived at minicamp. When I got that phone call on draft day [in '02], it was real exciting, but it didn't really hit me until I got to the Fort Lauderdale airport."

Most embarrassing moment? "My first game, when I was wide open and Jay Fiedler threw a ball that hit me right in the face."

Favorite off-day activity? "Shopping. I buy new clothes for me and my two kids, and I try to keep everybody clean."

If I weren't in the NFL, I'd be . . . "A kindergarten teacher. You've got to mold children when they're young, because when they get to high school, they get a little out of control."

Last Week

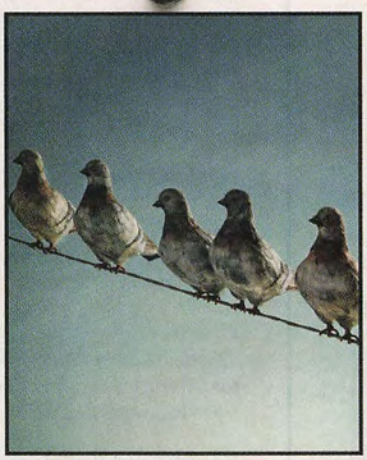
McMichael, the Dolphins' top pass catcher, had four receptions for 62 yards versus the Pats *(page 66)*.

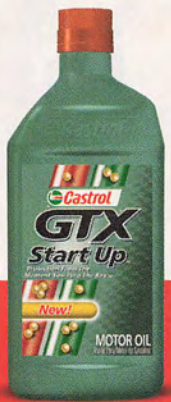
This Week

Goes to Buffalo. Week 6 has been good for McMichael: In '02 he had a team-high five catches; last year he picked up a loose ball and ran it in for a TD.

FERNANDO MEDINA/WIREIMAGE.COM (MCMICHAEL, 2); WILLIAM WHITEHURST/CORBIS (BUTTON); MANUEL BALCE CENETA/AP (FRIEDMAN); DAVE OXFORD/AP (SHORT); AJ MAST/ICON SMI (OBEN); TOM HAUCK/GETTY IMAGES (RASHEED ACTION); MICHAEL ZAGARIS/GETTY IMAGES (RASHEED STANDING)

What does your car fear most?





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No Place like Dome

In the fourth quarter or French Quarter, the Saints are a good reason to drink

OCT. 17 >> MINNESOTA VIKINGS AT NEW ORLEANS SAINTS >> 8:30 P.M. EST
LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN
LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN CAUSEWAY
VETERANS MEMORIAL BLVD.
PONT CHARTRAIN BLVD.
PARIS AVE.
CLEARVIEW PKWY.
CAUSEWAY BLVD.
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METAIRIE
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AIRLINE HWY.
ESPLANADE
CANAL ST.
TULANE AVE.
BROAD AVE.
SOUTHPORT
EARHART BLVD.
CLAIBORNE AVE.
JEFFERSON
JEFFERSON HY.
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MISSISSIPPI RIVER
FRENCH QUARTER
Rue Bourbon
Bourbon
J. OCKSON
LOUISIANA AVE.
ST. CHARLES AVE.
WESTWEGO
WEST BANK EXPWY.
GRETNA
HARVEY
MARRERO
BELLE CHASSE HY.
BARATARIA BLVD.
BUS 90
693 MILES NNE
Ludlow, Ky., DURO BAG MANUFACTURING CO. Largest paper bag manufacturer in the U.S. and likely supplier to the Bagheads of the 'Aints-era 1980s.
952 MILES N
WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE
Saints rookies had to run a human gantlet with pillow cases over their heads at '98 training camp. Kyle Turley bruised his right knee, Jeff Danish gashed his left arm and hand, and Cam Cleeland sprained an ankle and missed most of the preseason.
911 MILES NE
Newport News, Va.
TODD STADIUM
Ferguson High field where Saints QB Aaron Brooks starred. Watching in the stands: eighth-grader Michael Vick, also a Newport News native and Brooks's second cousin.
1,622 MILES WNW
Cardiff Reef, Calif.
Kicker John Carney's fave surf spot since his days in San Diego.

13 SUPERDOME

- FIRST REGULAR-SEASON GAME: Sept. 28, 1975, Bengals 21, Saints 0
- IN USE: 48 weekends a year
- SUPER BOWLS HOSTED: 6, most of any stadium
- AMOUNT OF ANODIZED ALUMINUM: More than 550,000 square feet
- CONCERT CROWD CAPACITY: 87,500 for Rolling Stones, 1981; largest indoor concert crowd ever
- HIGH SCHOOL PROMS HOSTED IN 2003: 3
- SCHOOLCHILDREN ON HAND TO SEE POPE IN '87: 80,000
- BUSH VISITS: 1 (In '88 H.W. nominated by GOP)

Visitors' View

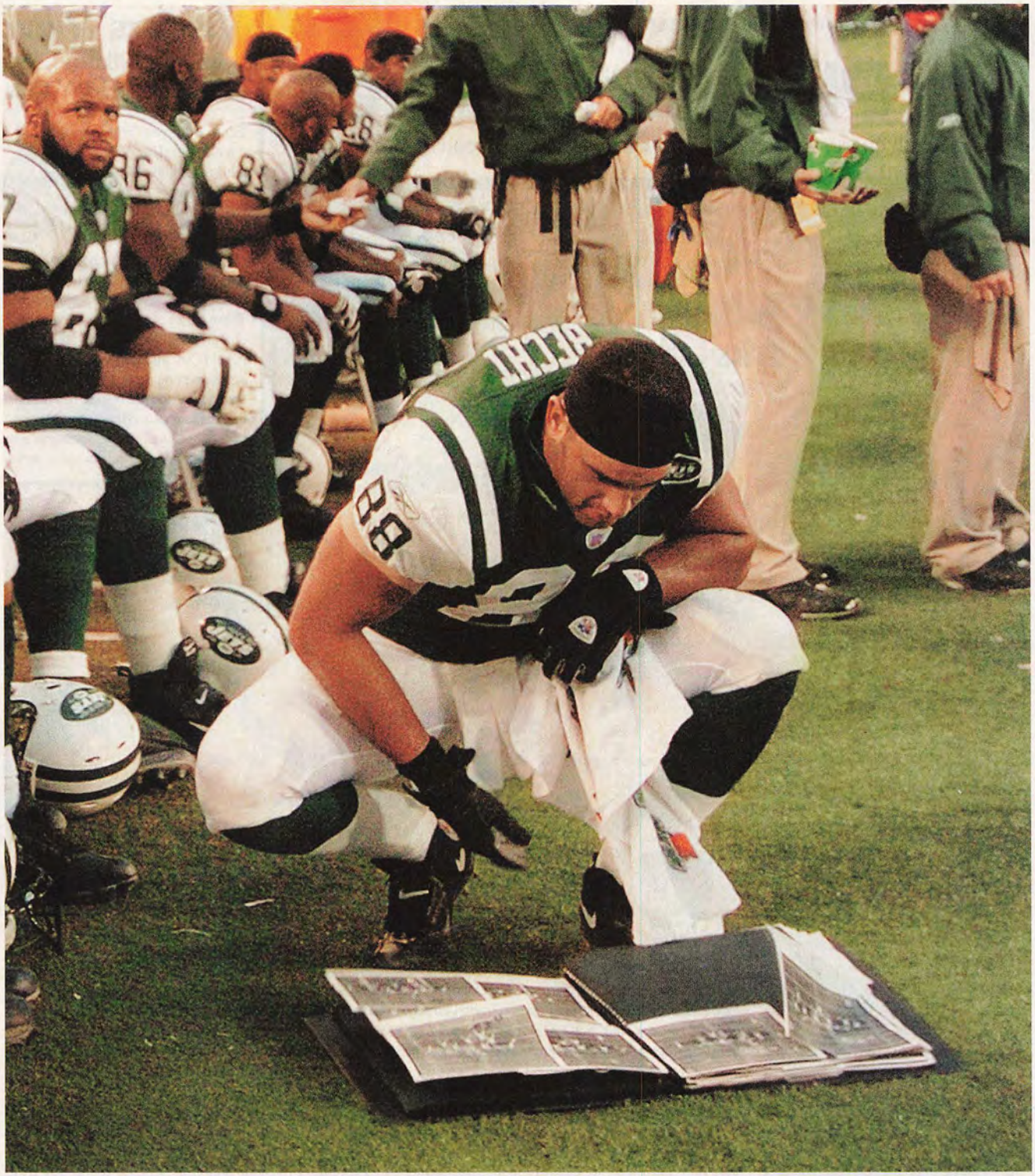
What the Vikings like about New Orleans

"Go to Popeyes. They've got a buffet. They've got a big selection of food. I like to go over there."
—Daunte Culpepper, quarterback

"I like to go to the French Quarter. I took my girl on a horse-and-carriage ride, and they give you a tour of the city. There's a lot of stuff they tell you, but I challenge it because I know about it too. An old U.S. mint was there. New Orleans was one of the richest cities, because they had the best of two ports—the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico."
—Chuck Wiley, defensive end and Louisiana native

[1] GARDEN DISTRICT Yard where Saints QB Archie Manning and sons played Amazing, a game in which Archie lobbed spirals from the Mannings' porch and Cooper, Peyton and Eli jumped and dived to make dramatic snags. Neighbors now include Nine Inch Nailer Trent Reznor. **[2] NEW ORLEANS ARENA** Home of New Orleans VooDoo, Saints owner Tom Benson's arena football team, which went 11–5 in its inaugural season. **[3] VOODOO MUSIC EXPERIENCE** The music weekend (Oct. 16–17) includes the Beastie Boys, Green Day and a Pixies reunion. **[4] TULANE STADIUM** Since demolished (a rec center is there now), this was the Saints' home from 1967 to '74, the filming location of the '69 Charlton-Heston-as-Saints-QB schlockfest, *Number One*, and the site of Tom Dempsey's record 63-yard field goal. **[5] HILTON NEW ORLEANS RIVERSIDE** Bears stayed here for Super Bowl XX in '86, and hotel received bomb threat after it was reported, falsely, that QB Jim McMahon had called local women and men "sluts" and "idiots," respectively. **[6] FREAKY TIKI TATTOOS** Where ex-Saints OT Kyle Turley got ink. **[7] SAINTS HALL OF FAME MUSEUM** The team is 228-334-5 all-time, so highlights are scarce. See portraits of venerable Saints, and Dempsey's custom shoe. **[8] LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN** Says wideout Donte' Stallworth of the brackish, 625-square-mile lake, "A lot of times I just sit there watching the water. Nobody bothers me, and I can just kind of chill. The water has a calming sound." **[9] BOURBON STREET** Main artery of Mardi Gras. In '84 Ken Stabler—then a banged-up Saints QB—watched the parade from above at The 544 Club. Some of his cronies yelled to women below, "Show us your [breasts]!" One shot back at Stabler, "Show us your knees!" **[10] THE HUDDLE** Former watering hole where Saints DE Doug Atkins ('67–69) fired at pictures of QBs Sonny Jurgensen and Billy Kilmer with a pistol. **[11] JEFFERSON DOWNS** Track, now defunct, where ex-Saints coach Bum Phillips raced his horse King of Gold, who pleased him because "he didn't even ask to renegotiate" after he won. **[12] FRENCH QUARTER** Where Stanley Kowalski bellows "Stellaaaa!" in *A Street Car Named Desire*. Elia Kazan's 1951 screen version, starring Marlon Brando, was shot in the Big Easy. *—Adam Duerson*

MAP BY STEVE STANKIEWICZ; AP (DEMPSEY); TOM CAMMETT/WIREIMAGE.COM (TURLEY); MICHAEL DEMOCKER/THE TIMES-PICAYUNE (LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN); ANDREW J. COHOON/AP (BAGHEAD); KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM (BEASTIE BOYS); CRAIG LASSING/GETTY IMAGES (CULPEPPER); JAMIE SQUIRE/GETTY IMAGES (BOURBON ST. SIGN); DILIP VISHWANAT/SPORTPICS (BROOKS); FRED JEWELL/AP (MCMAHON); BILL FRAKES (MANNINGS); BETTMANN/CORBIS (BRANDO); COURTESY OF ARENA FOOTBALL LEAGUE (VOODOO LOGO); MICHAEL DEMOCKER/THE TIMES-PICAYUNE (TULANE STADIUM); JOE MCBRIDE/CORBIS (SURFER); CHRIS GRAYTHEN/GETTY IMAGES (SUPERDOME); COURTESY OF UNIV. OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE (LOGO); RICHARD MACKSON (PHILLIPS)



Study Break

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN IACONO

HELP FROM ABOVE Jets tight end Anthony Becht is a guy who doesn't mind doing homework. A few years ago he was named a NASDAQ Scholar-Athlete at West Virginia, and on Sunday on the sideline he pored over photos of the Bills' defensive formations—Jets staff had snapped them from the top of the stadium earlier in the game—looking for an edge. He must have seen something: Becht's 11-yard catch on the Jets' final drive set up New York's game-winning field goal in a 16–14 win.

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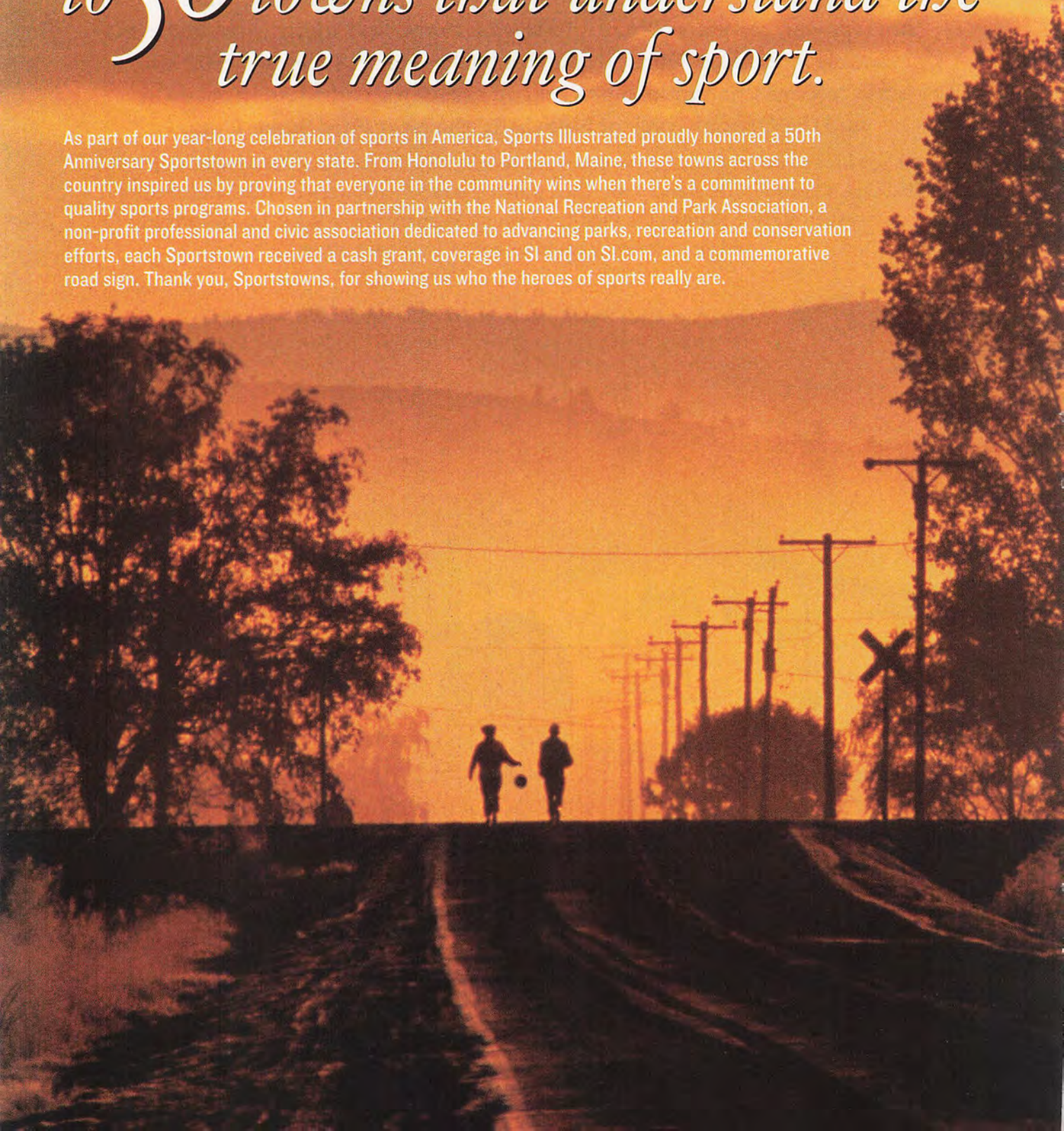
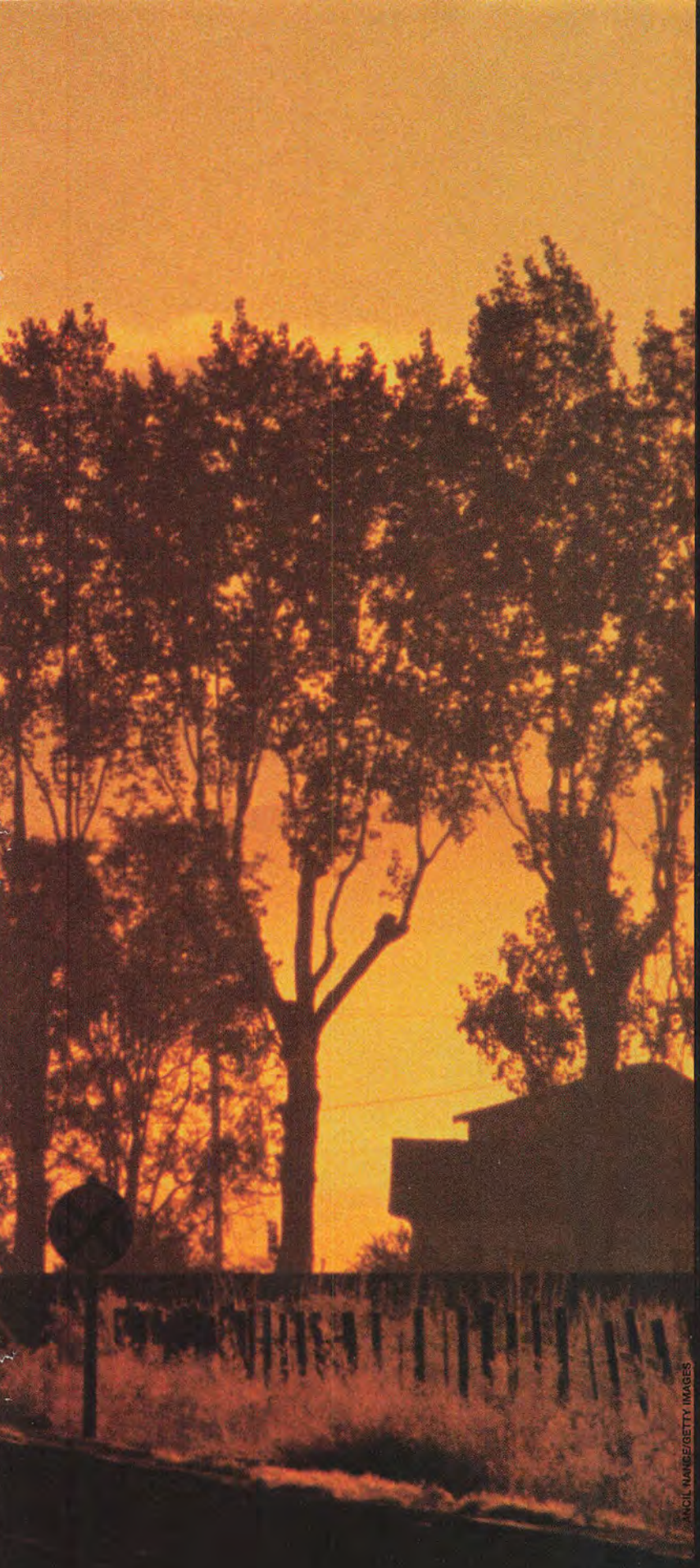
to 50 towns that understand the true meaning of sport.

As part of our year-long celebration of sports in America, Sports Illustrated proudly honored a 50th Anniversary Sportstown in every state. From Honolulu to Portland, Maine, these towns across the country inspired us by proving that everyone in the community wins when there's a commitment to quality sports programs. Chosen in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association, a non-profit professional and civic association dedicated to advancing parks, recreation and conservation efforts, each Sportstown received a cash grant, coverage in SI and on SI.com, and a commemorative road sign. Thank you, Sportstowns, for showing us who the heroes of sports really are.





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NEW HAMPSHIRE — Lebanon
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NEW MEXICO — Las Cruces
NEW YORK — Webster
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NORTH DAKOTA — Bismarck
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OKLAHOMA — Tulsa
OREGON — Tualitin Hills
PENNSYLVANIA — The Centre Region
RHODE ISLAND — Newport
SOUTH CAROLINA — Myrtle Beach
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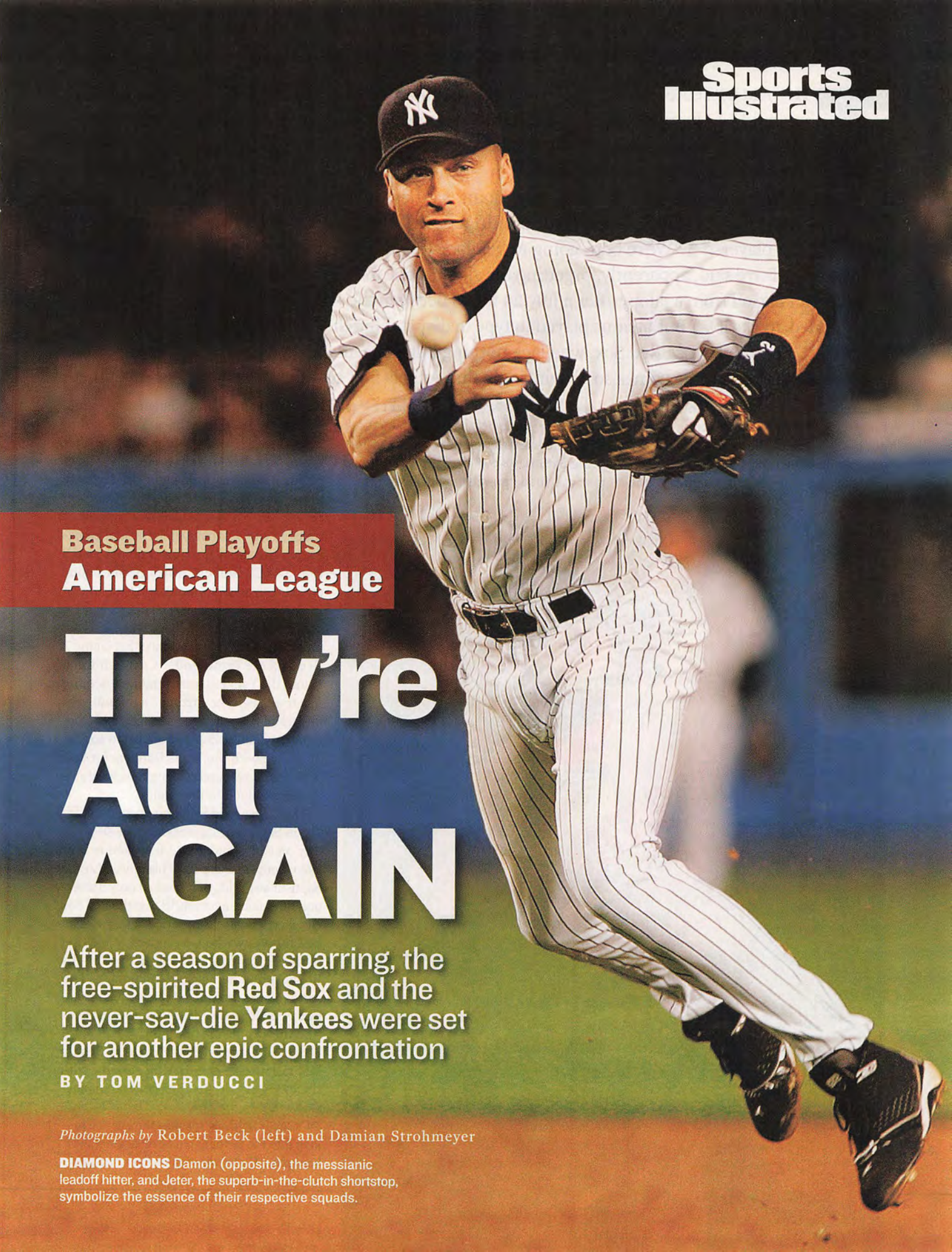


Baseball Playoffs
American League

They're At It AGAIN

After a season of sparring, the free-spirited **Red Sox** and the never-say-die **Yankees** were set for another epic confrontation

BY TOM VERDUCCI

Photographs by Robert Beck (left) and Damian Strohmeyer

DIAMOND ICONS Damon (opposite), the messianic leadoff hitter, and Jeter, the superb-in-the-clutch shortstop, symbolize the essence of their respective squads.

THE AMERICAN LEAGUE season was six months of calisthenics, all those games nothing but 1,140 jumping jacks, including seven passed off as Division Series matchups in which the outcome was supposedly in doubt. By last Saturday night, of course, the Boston Red Sox and the New York Yankees had outspent, outplayed and outlasted their competition. Properly warmed up, they arranged to meet again, as they did last year in the AL Championship Series, for what Yankees third baseman Alex Rodriguez calls, "the matchup everybody wanted to see, including the players." ¶ "We're both going to be bloody by the time it's over—not literally," Yankees manager Joe Torre said, apparently forgetting the sight of one of his pitchers, Tanyon Sturtze, leaking hemoglobin like oil from a jalopy after a July 24 brawl between the two teams. "Emotionally drained," Torre added, to clarify. ¶ Both teams played to type in dispatching the last obstacles to their inevitable rematch. The loaded, loose Red Sox, who lack nothing but a decent barber and a bit of couth, steamrollered Anaheim in three games so convincingly that Angels first baseman Darin Erstad exclaimed, "Those boys are winning the Series. That's the deepest team I've ever seen. They've got every piece of the puzzle. I don't see anybody beating them."

Meanwhile, the closely cropped, tight-lipped Yankees spotted the Minnesota Twins one game before ripping off three straight come-from-behind wins, the last being Saturday's 6–5 thriller in 11 innings that was made possible by Ruben Sierra's game-tying, three-run homer in the eighth. "The guy did what those Yankees do," Twins manager Ron Gardenhire said after it was over. "It's unbelievable."

Out of 48 postseason games under Torre in which they were six outs or fewer from defeat, the Yankees have now rallied 17 times to win. Of that Octoberfest of comebacks, the most famous was last year's iconic ALCS Game 7, which Aaron Boone ended with an 11th-inning walk-off homer.

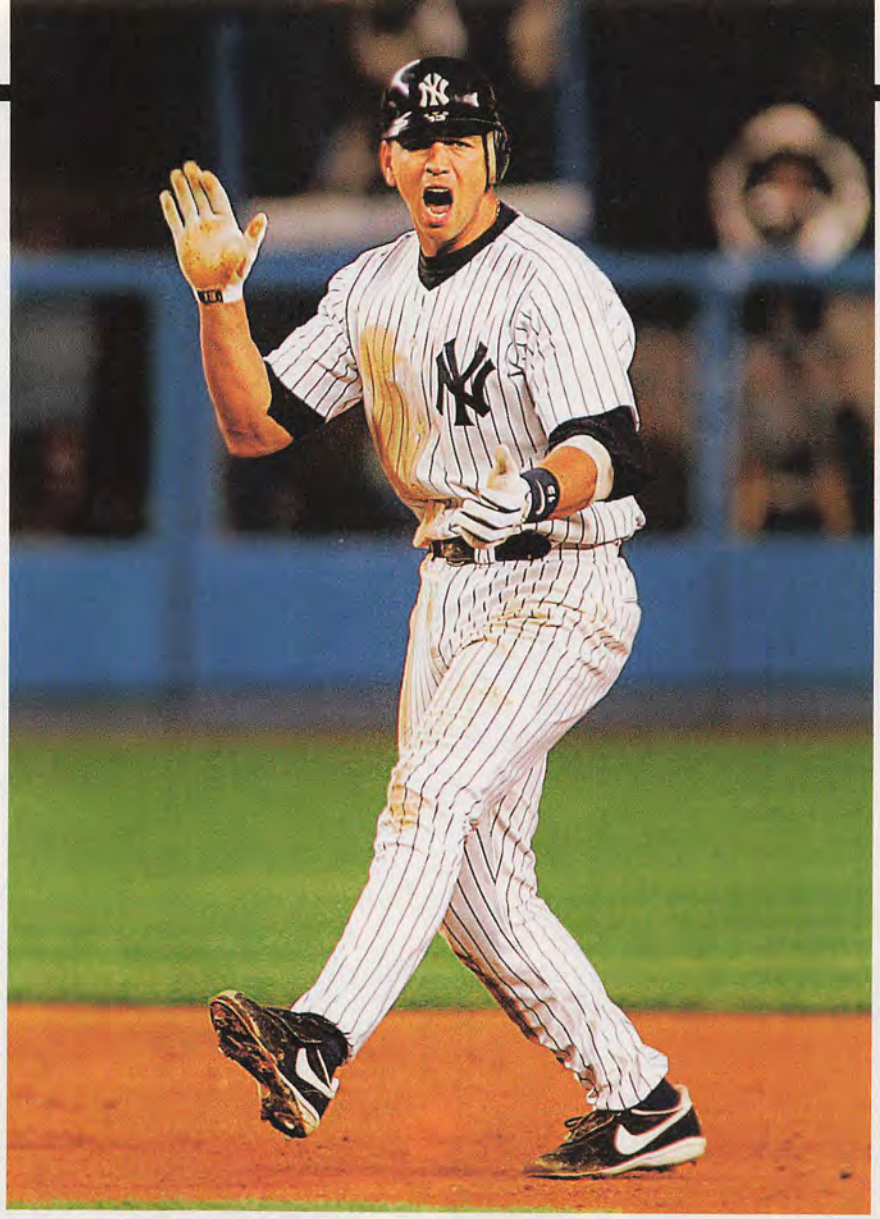
The two Division Series, however, also underscored how significantly the AL East archrivals have changed since that Game 7. Red Sox ace righthander Curt Schilling, whom the Yankees were unable to acquire in a trade with the Arizona Diamondbacks for lack of farm-system resources, and Rodriguez, whom Boston was unable to acquire in a trade with the Texas Rangers for lack of financial resources, bring new weapons and fresh blood to the rivalry.

The 37-year-old Schilling opened the Division Series with a workmanlike 9–3 victory on Oct. 5 and ended it soaked in beer and champagne as part of his official Boston baptism last Friday. (It marked only the second time since, ahem, 1918 that the Red Sox clinched a postseason series at home.) Not bad for a guy who was signed to his first professional contract—with Boston—by Boone's grandfather Ray. "I know the reason I'm here is to pitch big games in October," Schilling says. "That's why I came here. And this is only the first step."

Schilling agreed to the trade to Boston last fall after a negotiating session with then 29-year-old Red Sox general manag-

PSYCHED Schilling relishes the chance to step into the October cauldron against the Yankees. "That's why I came here," he says.

ROBERT BECK



BACK ON THE BEAM After struggling in RBI situations during the season, Rodriguez delivered several key hits against the Twins.

DAMIAN STROHMEYER

er Theo Epstein over Thanksgiving dinner at Schilling's suburban Phoenix home. "The first time I cook Thanksgiving and it's national news," Schilling's wife, Shonda, recalls. "Talk about pressure. But it was nice that Theo was so young. Curt threatened to have him babysit our kids."

This season Schilling discovered a Boston team that reminded him of the outlandish and goofy 1993 Philadelphia Phillies club, for which he starred. Righthander Pedro Martinez, for instance, blew off the on-field player introductions before ALDS Game 1 in Anaheim, then appeared for the intros before Game 3 at Fenway Park wearing a headband instead of a cap. For batting practice before that game, first baseman Kevin Millar donned a camouflage hat and reserve first baseman Doug Mientkiewicz sported Millar's jersey.

Centerfielder and leadoff batter Johnny Damon's Nazarene look is one of many extreme hairstyles—Friday's starting pitcher (Bronson Arroyo) wore cornrows and the winning reliever (Derek Lowe) a mullet—that have inspired homages from wigged-out Red Sox fans. And the players pick from a line of inspirational, bumper-sticker-like T-shirts to wear under their jerseys (e.g., WHY NOT US? . . . THE TIME IS NOW . . . IF 25 MEN BELIEVE THEY CAN, THEY WILL).

"Oh, it's not an act—these guys *are* crazy," Schilling says. "There must have been 50 times this year that we'd say in the clubhouse, 'Man, can you imagine if the public saw what we did?' This is a fraternity—a fraternity where you don't have to go to school and everybody has a hell of a lot of money. That's horribly dangerous. But come game time, this team plays hard, and it plays the game as right as it was meant to be played."

As it was last season, Boston is a relentless offensive club. Trying to pitch around Red Sox batters is like trying to make your way around the furniture in an unfamiliar room with the lights out. You can proceed as slowly and as carefully as you like, but eventually you'll crash into something. The three Anaheim starters, for instance, averaged a numbing 23 pitches per inning against Boston and lasted a total of only 12⅔ innings.

The Red Sox batted .302 and scored 25

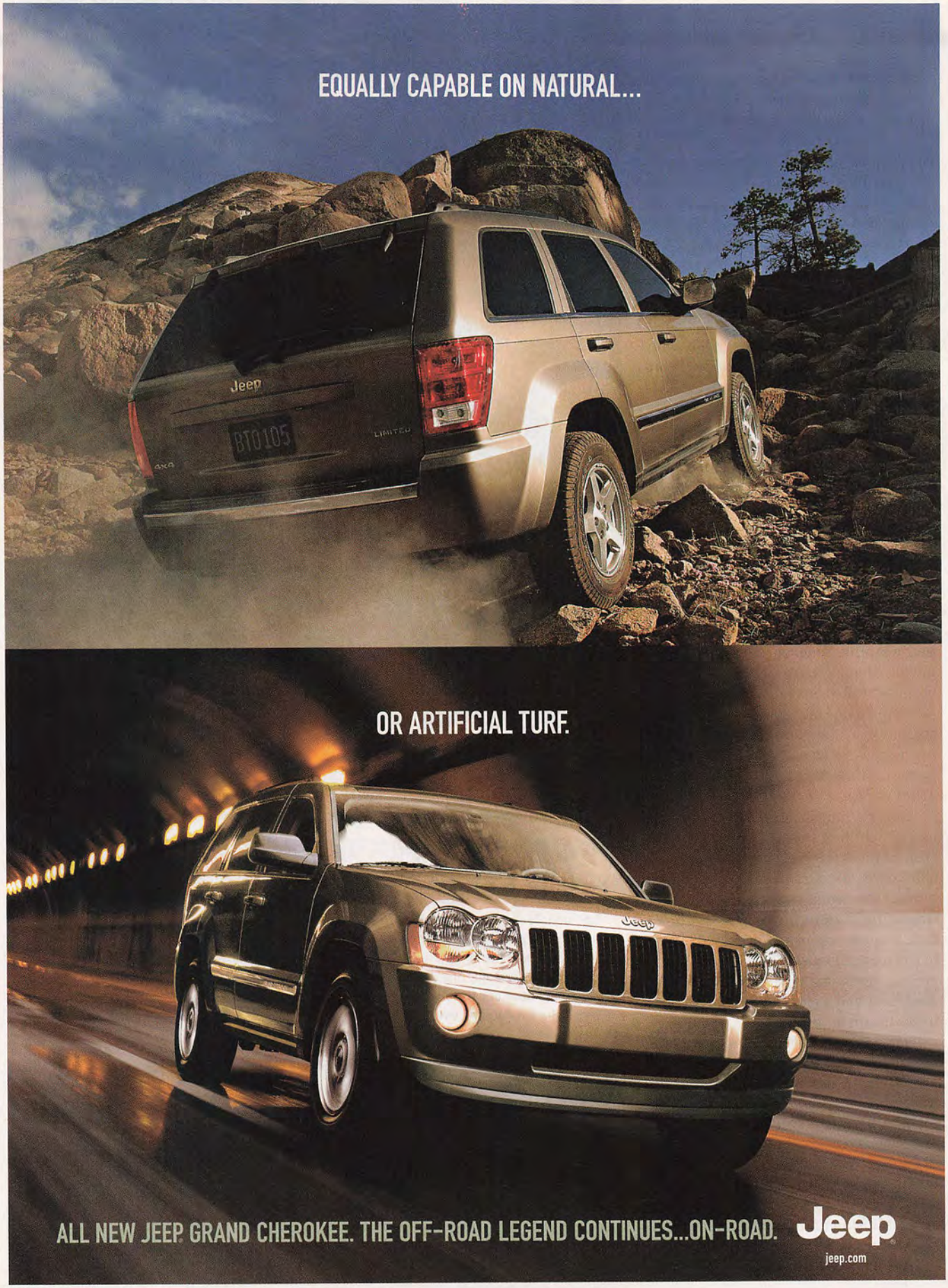
Batters Up

October is usually a time for pitchers, but sluggers thrived in this year's Division Series

Traditionally the playoffs are a time when fewer runs are scored than in the regular season and starting pitchers dominate. Not so in this year's Division Series, which had a high number of runs and homers per game (even higher than the season averages of 9.6 and 2.25, respectively) and only one starting pitcher lasting into the eighth inning (the Dodgers' Jose Lima, who shut out the Cardinals in Game 3). Here's a year-by-year look at the Division Series since it debuted nine years ago.

Year	Games	Runs	Runs Per Game	HRs	HRs Per Game	SP Reached 8th Inning
2004	16	166	10.4	50	3.13	1
2003	18	127	7.1	22	1.22	6
2002	17	185	10.9	45	2.65	1
2001	18	114	6.3	34	1.89	9
2000	15	121	8.1	20	1.33	6
1999	16	165	10.3	35	2.19	7
1998	14	89	6.4	27	1.93	8
1997	15	127	8.5	34	2.27	5
1996	14	117	8.4	35	2.50	5
1995	15	166	11.1	50	3.33	4

Source: Elias Sports Bureau



BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES
WATCH ABC'S COLLEGE FOOTBALL. SATURDAYS, ALL SEASON LONG.
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BUCKLE UP
Chrysler Financial

runs in the three games, the last two coming on a series-clinching walk-off homer by the neatly bearded David Ortiz, who looked not to heaven but to his rally-starting leadoff man when he said, "Thanks to you, Jesus."

With the Angels dispatched in short order, a rested Schilling, a career 6–1 pitcher in the postseason, could start three times if seven games were necessary against the Yankees. "I absolutely want to," Schilling says. He has, however, been plagued by a sore right ankle that has limited his effectiveness late in games. This season Schilling held batters to a .209 average through his first 75 pitches per outing, but they hit .310 thereafter.

And Schilling will face a Yankees lineup that does its best work late. New York prefers to grind out at bats against starting pitchers—on Saturday night Twins ace Johan Santana did not come out for the sixth inning after throwing 87 pitches on short rest—and beat up on bullpens. The Yankees have a major-league-record 64 come-from-behind wins this year, including a series-turning 7–6 win in ALDS Game 2, in which they trailed 6–5 with no one on base and one out in the 12th inning. Rodriguez tied it with a towering double off tiring Twins closer Joe Nathan, and two batters later Hideki Matsui hit a game-ending sacrifice fly. As Torre made his way out of Yankee Stadium that night, he shook his head and said, "I don't know what to say. What words are there for that? That doesn't take a backseat to any of the [other] ones we've pulled out."

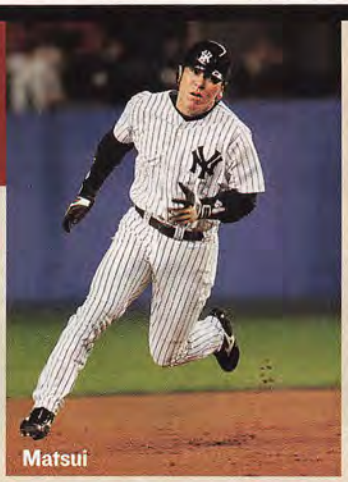
With the double, Rodriguez became a made Yankee, accepted not by blood ritual but by the requisite big moment in October. He also won Game 4 in the 11th by lashing a double, stealing third without a throw and scoring on a wild pitch. "It's very satisfying," says Rodriguez, a career .361 postseason hitter. "I mean, I've always felt most comfortable in October, and I've played my best baseball in October. It's a fun time to play."

The Yankees and the Red Sox entered the ALCS having played each other 45 times over the past two years, with Boston winning one more game than New York. Before Boone hit his epic home run last year, each team had three wins and had scored 29 runs in that series. "I anticipate it's going to be the same kind of emotional roller coaster," Torre says. "I guess it was supposed to come down to this." □

CHUCK SOLOMON (TOP); ROBERT BECK

WHAT THE SCOUTS SAY

Yankees


Matsui

THE RUNDOWN Picking up **John Olerud** was a masterstroke because of what he's done defensively at first base. Olerud doesn't have the same power that he used to have, but he's a veteran and still a threat. . . . Leftfielder **Hideki Matsui** is extremely dangerous right now. He's finishing strong. . . . **Mike Mussina** doesn't have the big velocity, but his knuckle curve is still very good. . . . **Jon Lieber** will run up high pitch counts because he doesn't have drop-dead stuff. If the Red Sox are patient, they will get to him. . . . **Kevin Brown**'s stuff is average but his competitiveness will help him against Boston. . . . I don't think **Mariano Rivera**'s recent family tragedy [two of his wife's relatives were electrocuted at his pool in Panama on Saturday] will affect him. He's such a professional and so mentally tough. . . . **Tanyon Sturtze** was very good down the stretch after a career of inconsistency. He's the only long reliever that manager **Joe Torre** trusts. **FOCAL POINT** After a horrible start this spring, shortstop **Derek Jeter** has been a very productive hitter [.316, four RBIs in the Division Series]. This has been his best year defensively. He's as much a clutch player as anybody in the league—the new Mr. October. **HOW TO BEAT THE RED SOX** New York doesn't have a power staff and the Red Sox, especially leadoff hitter **Johnny Damon**, are good at fouling off pitches and working their way on base, so the Yankees will need to vary their pitch sequences. They'll also have to throw inside to **Manny Ramirez** and **David Ortiz** and move them off the plate. The Yankees' hitters will have to wear down **Curt Schilling** and **Pedro Martinez** and be selective to get into the Boston bullpen.

WHAT THE SCOUTS SAY

Red Sox

Martinez

THE RUNDOWN **Curt Schilling** is still the best big-game pitcher in baseball. He really knows how to put away hitters. . . . Regarding **Pedro Martinez**'s infamous "Daddy" remark—that bulletin-board stuff goes over better in football. But if I were the Red Sox I'd be concerned that he hasn't pitched well against the Yankees. They've recognized that Pedro's stuff isn't as good as it used to be and they're not intimidated. . . . The Red Sox don't have a lot of weaknesses, but of the four closers left in the playoffs, **Keith Foulke** ranks fourth. . . . Boston's bullpen has been more consistent and more stable than the Yankees'. **Mike Timlin** and **Alan Embree** have solidified the setup spot. . . . The Yankees' pitchers might be tempted to relax a bit against **Jason Varitek** [.167 batting average in the Division Series], but he's very capable of hitting it out of the park. . . . In leftfield **Manny Ramirez** can look bad in a highlight clip, but when he pays attention he's a pretty good fielder—and he pays attention in the playoffs. **FOCAL POINT** Things go right for Boston when leadoff man **Johnny Damon** gets on and steals bases. He disrupts the pitcher's timing, and the guys batting behind him end up getting more fastballs. And everybody knows what Ramirez can do with those. **HOW TO BEAT THE YANKEES** The Sox need to exploit New York's starting pitching. Boston needs to score early because you don't want to get into a late-inning game with the Yankees, especially with the way **Mariano Rivera** can lock down games. The Red Sox pitchers need to control New York's big four of **Derek Jeter**, **Alex Rodriguez**, **Gary Sheffield** and **Hideki Matsui**.

National League

POWER Play

Though not firing on all cylinders, the Cardinals still had little trouble slugging their way past the Dodgers and into an LCS matchup with the resilient Astros

BY DANIEL G. HABIB

Photograph by David E. Klutho

APART FROM the obvious—as Los Angeles Dodgers rightfielder Milton Bradley puts it, "They don't call them the best team in baseball for nothing"—did we learn anything new about the St. Louis Cardinals as they cruised into the National League Championship Series against the Houston Astros? ¶ Well, in its four-game Division Series romp St. Louis answered the most common criticism of its 105–57 regular season—that it possessed competent but not overwhelming starting pitching—with something of a shrug. Other than righthander Jeff Suppan's stifling seven-inning, two-run performance in Sunday night's clincher at Chavez Ravine, the Cardinals' starters ranged from ordinary to substandard. They had a combined 4.24 ERA, striking out a meek 3.5 per nine innings and allowing 2.3 home runs per nine. These numbers are based on a small sample size, true, but the latter two would have ranked last in the majors this season. Yet, as has been the case all year, it didn't much matter.

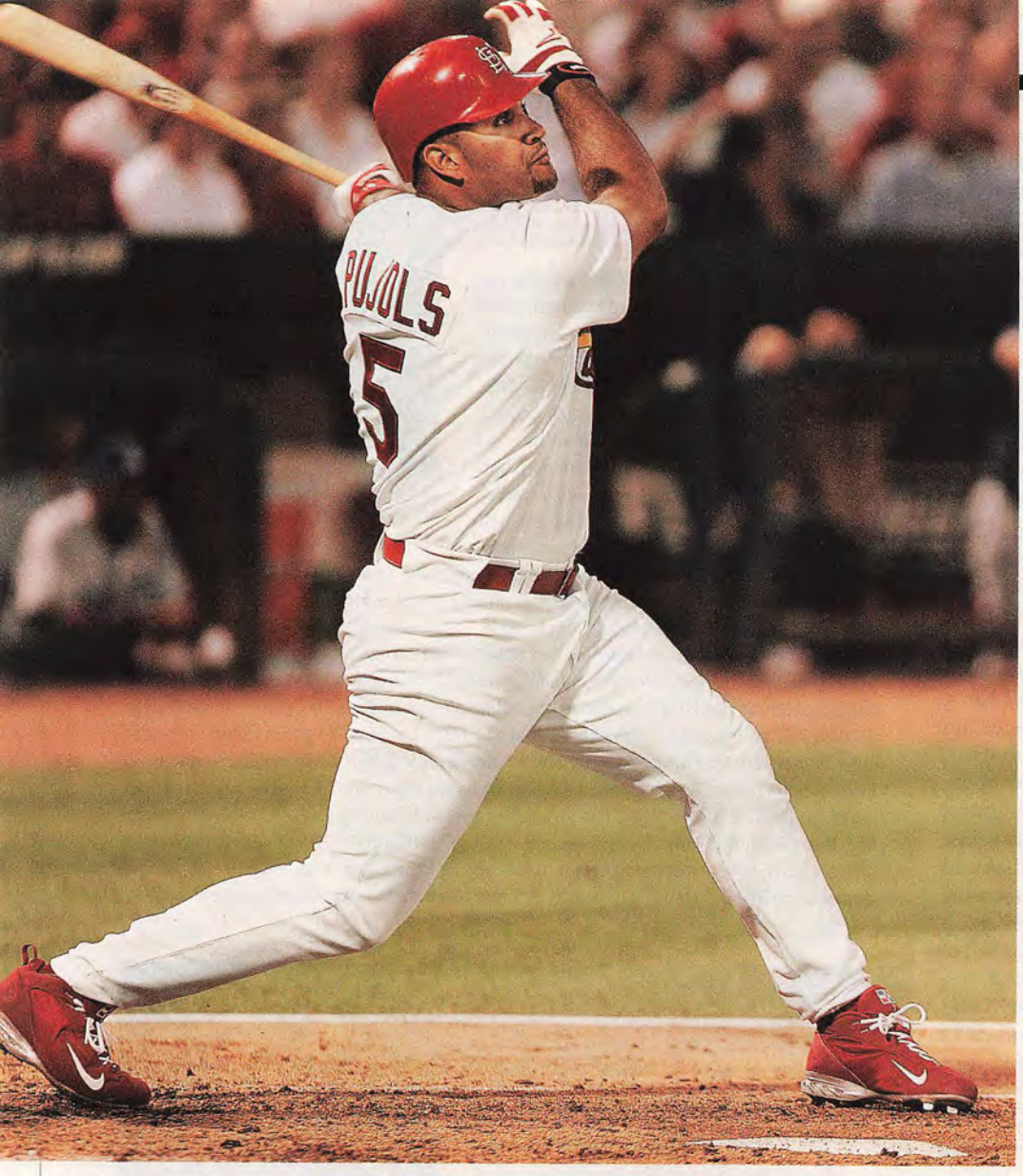
"When you have an offense like theirs—one that scores six, seven, eight runs a game—you don't need a dominant pitching staff," Dodgers lefthander Odalis Perez said after Game 4, a 6–2 St. Louis win that closely resembled its 8–3 victories in Games 1 and 2. "You can give up three or more runs and still have a chance."

It also helped that the Cardinals' relievers, who quietly amassed an NL-best 3.01 ERA and 57 saves in the regular season, announced themselves as a postseason force, working 11⅓ innings and allowing only one run. Though the Cards' bullpen lacks a filthy closer like the Houston Astros' Brad Lidge, it's much deeper than the Astros', particularly with a pair of lefthanders in Ray King and Steve Kline, who is sufficiently recovered from a tear in the flexor tendon of his left index finger to throw strikes with velocity. As a bonus, righthander Dan Haren, the Triple A Pacific Coast League strikeout leader as a starter for Memphis, has emerged as a valuable long man—thanks to his hard splitter—since his July 25 promotion.

FLAMEOUT? The Rocket showed signs of fatigue against Atlanta, walking eight in 12 innings and relying on off-speed pitches.

In contrast to Houston's Phil Garner—who trusts only righthanders Dan Miceli and Chad Qualls, regards the middle innings as a soft underbelly and will tap Lidge as early as is defensible—Cardinals manager Tony La Russa will yank his starters whenever necessary, and do so with confidence. He'll wave in a variety of relievers until he can get the ball to closer Jason Isringhausen, who isn't likely to work more than four outs.

Offensively, with the exception of a Game 3 interval in which Dodgers righthander Jose Lima shut them down 4–0, the Cardinals continue to mash the ball, no one more spectacularly than Albert Pujols. The 24-year-old first baseman bookended the series with home runs: in the bottom of the first inning of Game 1, a solo shot to straightaway center off a well-spotted slider low and away; and in the top of the fourth of Game 4, a three-run rainbow to left that put St. Louis up for good. Pujols confirms daily that, aside from Barry Bonds, he's the most complete hitter in baseball. Furthermore, his defense has improved to the degree that he handles difficult throws with ease and even makes the occasional dazzling play, such as his dive to smother Dodgers second baseman Alex



BOB ROSATO

TOP CARD With two home runs and five RBIs in the Division Series, Pujols showed why he's St. Louis's biggest bat.

Cora's hard smash in the hole on Sunday, a tough play for a righthanded first baseman.

Pujols's single-minded pursuit of excellence is becoming legend. (It is also the reason the Cardinals signed him to a seven-year, $100 million contract during the off-season, money he proclaimed to have "borrowed from God.") Last month La Russa recalled that in spring training Pujols, who had played some first base but had spent most of his previous two seasons in leftfield, took extra infield practice most days to prepare for playing first full time.

Not all is well in St. Louis, however. Third baseman Scott Rolen remained rusty from the left calf and knee injuries that cost him 16 games down the stretch. Though he fielded his position well, Rolen was 3 for 18 in the regular season's last week and 0 for 12 against the Dodgers, an ugly blight in the cleanup hole. Centerfielder Jim Edmonds, despite a two-run blast in Game 1, was 4 for 15 with nine strikeouts in the Division Series after finishing the season on a 3-for-35 slide. That the Cardinals scored a total of 22 runs in their three wins over L.A. while Rolen and Edmonds went a combined 2 for 19 tells you all you need to know about their offensive muscle.

The plucky Astros, who finished off the Braves 12–3 on Monday night in Game 5 of their Division Series, buried 42 years' worth of frustration by winning the franchise's first playoff series. All week Houston had confronted the specter of history—Atlanta had eliminated the Astros from the postseason in 1997, '99 and 2001—but catcher Brad Ausmus, like his mates, dismissed that lamentable legacy. "History is in the past, for the most part," he said with a smile after Game 3.

It was a coming-of-age year for the Astros, who struck more boldly in the off-season than any other NL team by signing free-agent starters Roger Clemens and Andy Pettitte, and then traded for prize centerfielder Carlos Beltran in June. Still, Houston had to swap managers (Garner replaced Jimy Williams on July 14) and pull off a frenetic 36–10 finish to clinch the wild card on the season's final day.

In the process a city fell in love with its team. Thanks largely to Clemens, the prodigal son returned, the Astros ushered close to 3.1 million fans through the turnstiles at Minute Maid Park this summer, a franchise record, and club chairman and CEO Drayton McLane gushed last Saturday, "I've never seen fans in Houston more exhilarated.

SI's Final Forecast

Senior writer Tom Verducci predicts a Red October

ALCS

Red Sox over Yankees in seven games

Led by the battle-tested Curt Schilling, Boston has the deeper pitching staff needed to withstand the war of attrition between two relentless offenses.

NLCS

Cardinals over Astros in six games

Houston's already thin pitching was overtaxed by the Braves in the Division Series, leaving the Astros vulnerable to the potent St. Louis lineup.

WORLD SERIES

Red Sox over Cardinals in seven games

Boston has the hottest team and the best starting pitching. The only reason not to pick the Red Sox is 86 years of history. This is the year the Curse is lifted.

Even when we were below .500, I had other owners asking me, 'How do you keep the fans coming?' They've just continued to support us. We can outdraw anything in Texas—except high school football."

In Beltran, Houston has a five-tool answer to Pujols: a gifted hitter—he went 10 for 22 against the Braves with four home runs, including two in the clincher—who's also the most agile defensive centerfielder in the majors. On Sunday he tracked a J.D. Drew drive up the incline of Tal's Hill in dead center at Minute Maid and backhanded the ball before crashing into the wall, a play whose difficulty was belied by Beltran's grace.

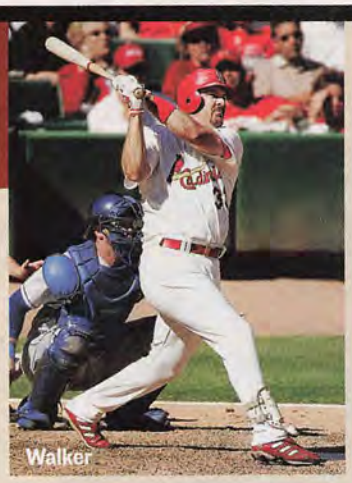
Against St. Louis the Astros face another uphill climb, mainly because Clemens has been showing signs of wear and tear. In light of season-ending injuries to Pettitte and righthander Wade Miller—and the resultant drop-off to the current No. 3 and No. 4 starters, righthanders Brandon Backe and Pete Munro—Clemens's postseason starts, along with those of 20-game-winning righthander Roy Oswalt, have become must wins. In two nondescript outings against Atlanta, the Rocket had a 3.00 ERA and 12 strikeouts in 12 innings not with his usual bravado but by nibbling (he walked eight) and throwing a disproportionate amount of off-speed stuff, much of it not his best. "He threw me the first hanging split *ever*," said Chipper Jones, who had faced Clemens 14 times entering Game 4, in which the 42-year-old righthander worked a gritty five innings on three days' rest. "There was evidence he wasn't sharp—it gave everybody confidence that he wasn't invincible."

Because Garner made the debatable decision to use Clemens and Oswalt on short rest in the Division Series, he was left with Backe and Munro, who had a combined 4.81 ERA this season, as the likely starters for Games 1 and 2 against St. Louis. Like Clemens, Oswalt ran out of gas in the fifth inning of the Division Series clincher and couldn't make the Braves swing and miss at his slow curve; three days' rest won't be a viable strategy against the Cardinals.

St. Louis is thus a prohibitive favorite to reach its first World Series since 1987. After his team had lost the Division Series, Dodgers manager Jim Tracy could only shake his head, describing the Cardinals as "a very stressful lineup to pitch against." And Perez, who had a 14.40 ERA to show for his two starts, conceded even more: "Whoever they play in the World Series is going to have a very hard time." □

WHAT THE SCOUTS SAY

Cardinals


Walker

THE RUNDOWN The Cardinals' rotation is made up of No. 3 and No. 4 starters who all lack a knockout pitch. **Matt Morris**'s stuff has become ordinary. He's a tremendous competitor, but his breaking ball is not as crisp as it used to be and his command isn't as good either. . . . There's not a dominant arm in the bullpen, and **Jason Isringhausen** is not a championship-caliber closer. . . . The lineup is a lethal combination of patience and power. **Larry Walker, Albert Pujols, Scott Rolen** and **Jim Edmonds** are all 40-homer guys who also wear out a pitcher and take what he gives them. . . . **Tony Womack** can change a game. He'll steal a base even when everyone in the park knows he's going to do it. . . . Defensively this club won't give you a fourth out, and Pujols's improvement at first base this season makes them that much better. . . . **Mike Matheny** is the best defensive catcher I've seen in a long time. His knowledge of hitters and his ability to block balls and keep borderline pitches in the strike zone is outstanding. **FOCAL POINT** Trading for Walker in August was huge. Last September in Colorado he was out of shape, but that's not the case now. He's rededicated himself to staying fit and is 20 to 25 pounds lighter. As a result he has recaptured his swing and he's faster in the outfield. **HOW TO BEAT THE ASTROS** The St. Louis starters will have to have pinpoint control and pray that their hitters put a lot of runs on the board. The Cardinals have to get to the Astros' starters early, because you don't want to face closer **Brad Lidge.** They have to make **Roger Clemens** and **Roy Oswalt** work; if they do, St. Louis has a shot to wear down Houston's bullpen.

WHAT THE SCOUTS SAY

Astros

Lidge

THE RUNDOWN **Roger Clemens** has helped **Roy Oswalt** become a complete pitcher. Oswalt's fastball has a second gear, and his curve is nasty. . . . It was Christmas in June when the Astros got **Carlos Beltran.** In that hitters' ballpark, Houston had a screaming need for a true centerfielder. . . . **Craig Biggio** abandoned his leg kick, and he's closer to being the selective hitter he used to be. . . . **Jeff Bagwell** has the monkey off his back after hitting his first two playoff home runs against Atlanta. He's a bona fide No. 3 hitter who walks and is a threat to homer, but his swing has lost some of its thunder because of his shoulder injury. . . . **Jeff Kent** is still a steady performer, though he can be beaten with fastballs that never used to get by him. . . . **Morgan Ensberg** has too many holes in his rigid swing. In that lineup **Mike Lamb** is a better option at third base. . . . **Phil Garner** has made a tremendous difference as manager the last three months; the Astros are more aggressive on the base paths and playing together again. **FOCAL POINT** Trading Octavio Dotel for Beltran allowed the Astros to elevate **Brad Lidge**, who has established himself as a premier closer. His slider is usually unhittable: Sometimes it looks like a slider, sometimes it resembles a hard curve, and sometimes it looks like a split-finger. **HOW TO BEAT THE CARDINALS** The Astros have to get at least seven innings from Clemens and Oswalt to keep their bullpen from wearing down. The heart of St. Louis's order is devastating, but **Jim Edmonds** and **Scott Rolen** will chase fastballs up in the zone. When **Edgar Renteria** falls behind in the count he'll panic and swing at breaking balls off the plate.

JONATHAN BROWNFIELD (TOP); DAVID E. KLUTHO

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Sports Siblings Can Create A Challenge

BY RICK WOLFF

In the NFL you have the Manning boys, Peyton and Eli, both No. 1 draft choices. In pro tennis you have the Williams sisters, Venus and Serena, both Grand Slam champions. In baseball you find the Boones, Aaron and Bret, both All-Stars in the 2003 season.

You name the sport and there's a pretty good chance a number of sibling combinations are doing well at the highest pro level. And you can bet their parents—even Archie Manning and Bob Boone, who were accomplished pro athletes themselves—encountered the many challenges of having more than one child in competitive youth sports.

One of the most common hurdles is the complexity of time management—trying to maintain your own schedule while making sure all your kids can get to practices and games. I provided some ideas for handling schedule mayhem in *Keeping Your Balance With A Crazy Calendar*, in the Aug. 23 issue. That can be hard enough with just one athlete under your roof, and with siblings, the issue of favoritism further complicates matters.

No parent wants a child to feel like his brother or sister is getting more attention—and kids do keep track of whose games their parents are attending. So it's vital to work out a fair schedule. If you have two or three kids who are close in age and who play on different teams, it might be difficult. At the start of each season, put all the kids' games on one master schedule and work out where Mom is going to be and where Dad is going to be, making sure both see each kid play the same number of games.

Another challenge: how to deal with true sibling rivalries. They routinely exist, especially when youngsters are within three years of age. Rivalries can often have benign beginnings: The older child invariably likes having a younger brother or sister to play with. And from the perspective of the younger one, he or she gets the learning experience of playing with and against an older and more seasoned athlete.

Most often, you just have to keep an eye on the competition between the two to make sure it doesn't get too heated. (Every so often you'll need to push the kids off to play with friends their own age or by themselves.) But more serious issues can develop when there's a noticeable difference in skills between them. What do you do if one child is athletically gifted but the other isn't?

These situations can be tough on a family. Kids will get frustrated by hearing about big bro's goals, touchdowns and strikeouts when they can't seem to achieve similar success. Although working hard, they simply plod along with the rest of the pack. Parents must do their best to make sure no significant self-esteem problems result. When everyone is together, say for a family road trip or dinner, take the time to enthusiastically praise each child for his or her unique qualities. Be specific in your support. Your youngest son might not be able to run the football as well as his brother, but he's doing well in school and can play the violin beautifully. And your daughter, while doing better and better in sports, deserves praise for her work with Habitat for Humanity.

Last, regardless of whether a sibling isn't as skilled as a big brother or sister, the younger child might expect special "star in waiting" treatment from a coach who remembers how good his brother or sister was. And the coaching staff instinctively starts to place unrealistic expectations on the younger one. To head this off, take some time in advance to meet with the head coach. Remind him that all you want is for him to evaluate your child objectively, according to his own unique abilities.

Rick Wolff is chairman of the Center for Sports Parenting (www.sportsparenting.org). His weekly radio show, The Sports Edge, *is heard every Sunday morning on WFAN Sports Radio 660 AM in New York.*

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GRAB LIFE BY THE HORNS

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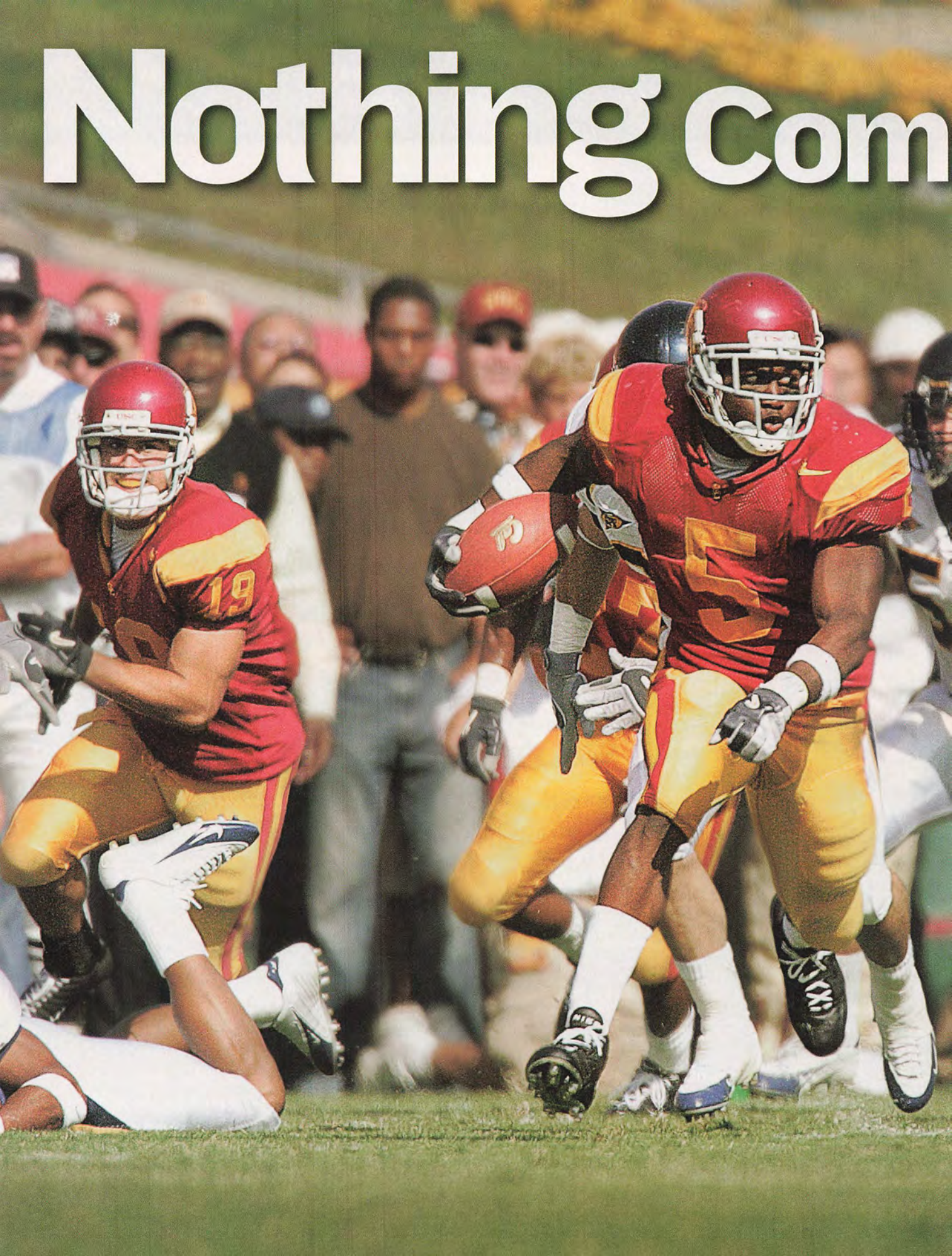

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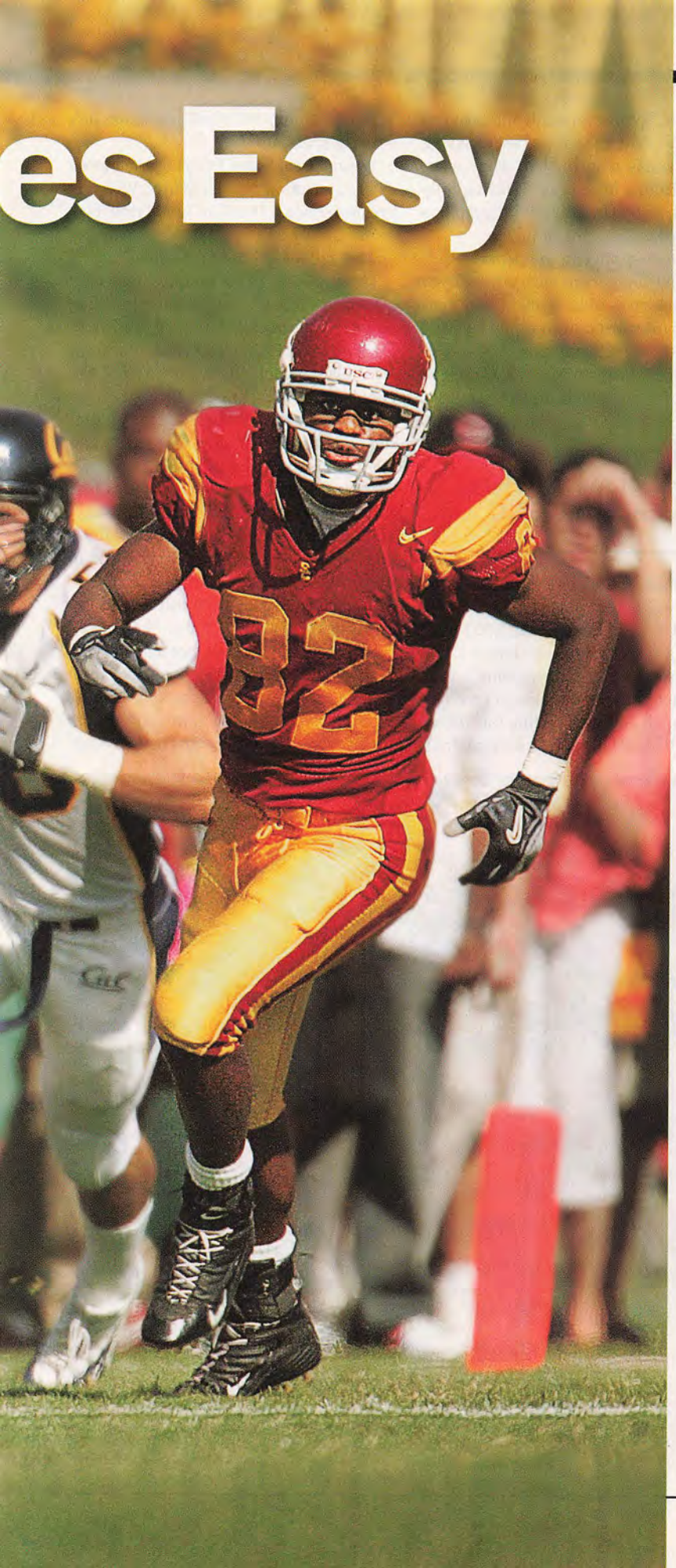


Though USC remains No. 1 in the polls, the Trojans struggled against high-flying Cal (No. 8). How much longer can they live on the edge?

BY AUSTIN MURPHY

Photograph by Peter Read Miller

LOFA TATUPU arrived late and in a bad mood. The USC linebacker had just watched Cal quarterback Aaron Rodgers complete his 20th consecutive pass, a little flare that Bears fullback Chris Manderino turned into a seven-yard gain. As the fullback fought to stay upright, Tatupu repeatedly tried to punch the ball from his grasp. Problem was, he kept missing the ball, landing right after right on Manderino's back.

Walking back, Rodgers got in Tatupu's face and said, "You didn't come close to the ball."

Tatupu flashed an expression that said, And your point is? "I don't care," he replied.

In that moment Tatupu spoke for his teammates, his coaches and the Trojans fans among the 90,008 souls who jammed the Los Angeles Coliseum for what turned out to be one of the most electrifying college games of this young season. The most significant matchup west of the Big 12 in 2004, this intrastate smackdown was an epic battle of wits between two of the college game's big brains: Cal coach Jeff Tedford, a turnaround specialist and offensive savant, and his USC counterpart, the defensive mastermind Pete Carroll. When it was over—after Rodgers had tied an NCAA single-game record by connecting on 23 straight passes, after the defending national co-champions had survived a tachycardia-inducing goal line stand and hung on for a 23–17 win—the Trojans did not care that they'd been beaten everywhere but on the scoreboard. They didn't care that Cal had rung up 28 first downs to their 12, or 157 rushing yards to their 41, or 267 passing yards to their 164. They cared about the number in their loss column: zero.

"It's not exactly how you might like [to win]," Carroll admitted, "but when you play a Top 10 team this is what you should expect. It's going to be really hard."

FOR NAUGHT Reggie Bush's 84-yard kickoff return showed why he's called the most explosive player in the land—but USC failed to turn the play into points.

The No. 1–ranked Trojans may yet make it to the Orange Bowl, site of this season's BCS title game, but it's going to be, to parrot Carroll, really hard. Unlike the '03 Southern Cal squad, whose average margin of victory en route to the AP national title was 23.4 points, this crew has not been dominating; three of its five wins—over Cal (now No. 8), Stanford and Virginia Tech—have been uncomfortably close.

Repeating as national champion would have been difficult even without the misfortunes that have befallen USC since the spring. Starting tackle Winston Justice was suspended for the fall semester for flashing a "replica firearm" at another student last February. Starting fullback Brandon Hancock ruptured a muscle in his chest and tore his right ACL; he'll miss the entire season. Wide receiver Whitney Lewis, coming off a dazzling spring and penciled in as a starter, became an academic casualty. Dominique Byrd, the team's best receiving tight end, missed spring ball while recuperating from a knee injury. Having fully recovered, he cracked his left kneecap in a pickup basketball game in July.

It was lemon juice in the paper cut for Carroll that the person with whom Byrd banged knees was Mike Williams, the erstwhile Trojans wideout who would be vying for the Heisman Trophy this season if he hadn't decided to join Maurice Clarett in declaring for the NFL draft last February. (Barred from the draft by the courts in May, Williams was denied reinstatement to USC by the NCAA.) There was the 2003 first-team All-America on the sideline at USC's practice last Thursday, passing time in football limbo by raising his voice at receivers who dropped balls and poking fun at Carroll, who likes to take part in passing drills.

When it was over, the Trojans didn't care that they'd been beaten everywhere but on the scoreboard. They cared about the number in their loss column: ZERO.

"Look at him pat the ball—he thinks he's a real quarterback!"

When the subject of Dwayne Jarrett arose in a conversation with a reporter, Williams became serious. "I talk to him a little bit," he said. "He's a little homesick or whatever. He's talking about transferring."

Jarrett, a 6' 5", 195-pound freshman with a 40-inch vertical leap and game-breaking talent, has been called upon by Carroll to fill Williams's shoes. The freshman from New Brunswick, N.J., went into the Cal game with 13 catches, including two for touchdowns, but he'd had difficulty hanging on to the ball. Even when Jarrett had been at his most stone-handed, however, Trojans quarterback Matt Leinart had always come back to him. "You get frustrated here and there when receivers miss a pass," says Leinart, "but they've got to know I have confidence in them."

That patience paid off on Saturday, as Jarrett caught four passes for 37 yards and a touchdown and dropped not a single ball. He was also responsible for the game's most spectacular play, soaring to snare a pass when USC went for it on fourth-and-11 from the Cal 32-yard line in the first quarter. Low-

GOOD HANDS Jarrett recovered from his early-season dropsies to snare four balls, including this TD.

ROBERT BECK

Red River Shutout

After yet another disheartening loss to their biggest rivals, the Longhorns were left grasping for answers

BURNT Peterson, the Sooners' freshman phenom, ran all over Texas, while the Oklahoma D completely shut down Young.

BOB ROSATO (2)

THE MAN who runs Texas's defense knew he was supposed to find a silver lining in the team's 12–0 loss to Oklahoma last Saturday. But sitting on a folding chair outside the Cotton Bowl, with rain drizzling around him, co–defensive coordinator Greg Robinson let his frustration spill over into tears. "It ticks me off to know that we had 'em in our sights at 6–0 but just didn't make the plays," said Robinson, a 30-year NFL and college coaching veteran who turned 53 that day. "I feel so very, very bad for these guys."

As Robinson shed his tears, his players showed little emotion after Texas's fifth straight failure in the Red River rivalry and the Longhorns' first shutout in 282 games. "We play [OU] every year, and someone's got to fall," senior linebacker Derrick Johnson said dully. "Oklahoma had a better game plan than we did and made plays at the right moments. That's the way it is."

Texas had taken steps to reverse its fortunes in its annual meeting with the Sooners. After reviewing last October's 65–13 debacle in Dallas, Longhorns coach Mack Brown concluded, reasonably, that his team had to get tougher. He gave powerful tailback Cedric Benson a bigger role in the offense and brought in Robinson, who'd been the Kansas City Chiefs' defensive coordinator, and former Arizona coach Dick Tomey to hone Texas's tackling and make the Longhorns more tenacious on D. The newfound toughness was apparent in the team's first four games as Texas ranked among the NCAA's top 10 in scoring defense (11.8 points per game) and fumble recoveries (seven). "We've built a good foundation," said Robinson last week. "I believe we've progressed."

Problem is, so had second-ranked Oklahoma, which had outscored opponents by an average of 26 points going into Saturday's game. Through three quarters the Longhorns held OU's potent attack to two field goals, which might have meant something had the Sooners not denied Texas a single snap in the red zone. While Oklahoma's defense limited sophomore quarterback Vince Young to just 86 yards on 8 for 23 passing and held Benson to less than 100 yards for the first time this season, Sooners true freshman Adrian Peterson ground up Robinson's defense for 225 rushing yards.

Shortly after Oklahoma's Kejuan Jones made a six-yard charge with 8:07 left for the day's only touchdown, a few particularly burnt-out of the burnt-orange faithful were headed for the exits. A pair of Longhorns-leaning paramedics behind the end zone debated whether Brown would put his house up for sale this year or next. "This is the game we wait for all year," said Drew Augustine, one of the medics, "and you can't help but feel like a loser."

A growing number of Texas fans think the Longhorns' next tweak should be to replace their coach—even though Brown has an .800 conference winning percentage over seven seasons. It would be one thing, they say, if Oklahoma were Brown's only problem. But as the performance of Peterson, a Palestine, Texas, product, made clear, the longtime recruiting guru has lost his lock on talent within his own state, which does not bode well for Red River vindication this decade.

Brown, whose team dropped to ninth in the nation, has repeatedly said that he'll take all the blame for the Longhorns' inability to beat Oklahoma, but he hasn't lost the support of the man who hired him. "This game doesn't change [the fact that] Mack Brown is the best thing that has happened at Texas," athletic director DeLoss Dodds said last Thursday. "I like the kids, and I like the coaches. It's a feel-good sort of program."

On most fall Saturdays, especially those spent amid the rolling hills of Austin rather than in downtown Dallas, that's true. But not on the Saturday that has come to count more than all the rest of them combined. —*Kelley King*

Any Given Saturday

The depth of talent and the intensity of the fans have made the always-wild SEC more unpredictable than ever

PARITY HAS pervaded college football over the past few years, and nowhere is it more evident than below the Mason-Dixon Line. On Saturday night in the Southeastern Conference, No. 3 Georgia lost 19–14 to a 17th-ranked Tennessee team that had been whipped by No. 8 Auburn the previous week, and No. 12 Florida fell 24–21 to a 24th-ranked LSU team that had just been trounced by Georgia. The Bulldogs and the Vols are now tied atop the SEC East at 2–1, and only SEC West leader Auburn remains unscathed in conference play. Tigers coach Tommy Tuberville isn't feeling all that comfy at the top. "You can't rest on an SEC schedule," says Tuberville, whose team, now No. 4, has tough games with Arkansas, Georgia and Alabama. "Do that, and you lose."

What's up with all the unpredictability? The most obvious explanation is that the SEC is the nation's deepest, most talented conference. With the exception of Mississippi State, any team can shock any other, as unranked Ole Miss showed in a 31–28 defeat of No. 25 South Carolina last weekend. "It's getting difficult to tell the best teams in that conference apart," says Louisiana Tech coach Jack Bicknell, whose Bulldogs have played Auburn and Tennessee. "You can see how one might match up well against one team and not so well against another."

It's no accident that Tennessee and LSU have been up and down and up again this season. Both have filled key holes with freshmen, who, despite prodigious talents, are prone to mistakes. "Our team did a lot of growing, in this week and in this game," said LSU coach Nick Saban late Saturday night. "All year long it's felt like we were standing on a boat. This is the first time I felt this team get grounded."

Coaches and players say the SEC's game-day atmosphere is another factor. There's nothing like an SEC crowd to rattle a favored visitor or galvanize a seemingly overmatched home team. But that intensity can backfire. "It's difficult to reach the emotion of last week," said Georgia senior wideout Fred Gibson, who experienced the low of losing to Tennessee in Athens after the high of beating LSU between the hedges a week earlier.

Florida-Georgia on Oct. 30 and Georgia-Auburn on Nov. 13 will give a better idea of who'll land in Atlanta for the Dec. 4 SEC championship game. Until then? If recent history has taught us anything, it's that anyone's guess is bound to be wrong. —K.K.

SINKING FEELING A week after a momentous win over LSU, Georgia felt the sting of a home defeat to Tennessee.

bridged at the apex of his leap, Jarrett somersaulted in midair and hung on to the ball despite a violent landing. That circus catch set up the Trojans' first touchdown.

"This was the first time you could see what Dwayne can do," said Carroll, unable to contain his excitement in his office 45 minutes after the game. "It was exactly like what Mike Williams used to do here."

Saturday also marked the return to the lineup of Byrd, who, despite catching 10 passes against the first-string defense in practice, was shut out by Cal. In keeping with the nothing-comes-easy ethos of these '04 Trojans, Byrd's return and Jarrett's arrival was offset by the departure of Steve Smith, Leinart's go-to receiver. The sophomore left the Coliseum on crutches, having fractured his left fibula after a catch across the middle in the third quarter. He's likely to be out for six weeks. Smith was replaced by senior Jason Mitchell, a reserve best known for his prowess as a downfield blocker. Carroll called the loss of Smith "huge."

His absence contributed to the good-but-not-great showing by Leinart, who completed 15 of 25 passes for 164 yards. He threw two TDs and an interception and spent more time than usual on his back. While Leinart blamed himself for the four sacks USC gave up, the truth is, he's throwing behind a young line to inexperienced receivers who can't always get open.

Leinart suffered in comparison with Rodgers, as any QB in the country would have on Saturday. The Cal junior finished a sterling 29 of 34 for one touchdown and no picks. Even his first incompletion, which came with 8:57 left in the game, impressed: Rather than shoehorn a pass to Manderino at the left sideline hoping to keep his streak alive, Rodgers safely threw the ball away.

Rodgers presented a puzzle for Carroll, who serves as his own defensive coordinator. If the Trojans blitzed, Rodgers would make them pay, as he had a year ago during the Bears' 34–31 triple-overtime win over USC, which cost the Trojans a chance at an undisputed national championship. When Carroll sent only four rushers, Rodgers had the time, and the pinpoint accuracy, to find the underneath receiver.

"They gave us the look we saw on film all week," said Rodgers afterward. "We knew we could exploit 'em underneath."

That style—taking the short stuff—won't work against USC unless a quarterback is "extraordinarily efficient," Carroll pointed out. "But this guy was friggin' lights out."

GARY BOGDON

Rodgers did not deny that he had looked forward to sharing the stage with the more ballyhooed Leinart. The appearance of those two, and other, NFL prospects lured more than a dozen pro scouts to the Coliseum. "No question, both guys have NFL futures," said one NFC scout of the quarterbacks. "Aaron's probably a little more mobile than Leinart, and he's got a purer NFL arm. He's got a great command of his ball. He throws with accuracy, throws with touch and he's got arm strength. Those are the three components you need."

Not bad for a kid who couldn't get a sniff from a Division I college coming out of high school in Chico, Calif. After flirting with the idea of playing at Division III Lewis and Clark, and even of quitting football to concentrate on baseball, Rodgers enrolled at Butte College, a juco in nearby Oroville, where he starred for a season. The day after he committed to Cal, Rodgers says, he got a phone call from then Washington coach Rick Neuheisel, who declared, "We've wanted you from Day One. We've got a scholarship for you."

"Slick Rick," says Rodgers, smiling.

Rodgers's 20-yard laser to Geoff MacArthur midway through the third quarter set up Cal's final score. It also was his 19th straight completion, two more than the previous Pac-10 record, set in '84 by then UCLA quarterback Rick Neuheisel.

The Bears drove the ball down the field on their final two possessions but could not get in the end zone. "We rope-a-doped 'em," joked Carroll. The first drive was terminated by a missed field goal. The Trojans promptly went three and out. During the TV timeout preceding Cal's final possession, which started on its own 35-yard line with 4:31 to play, a USC coach could be heard telling his charges, "Make 'em go 65 yards! Make 'em [screw] it up!"

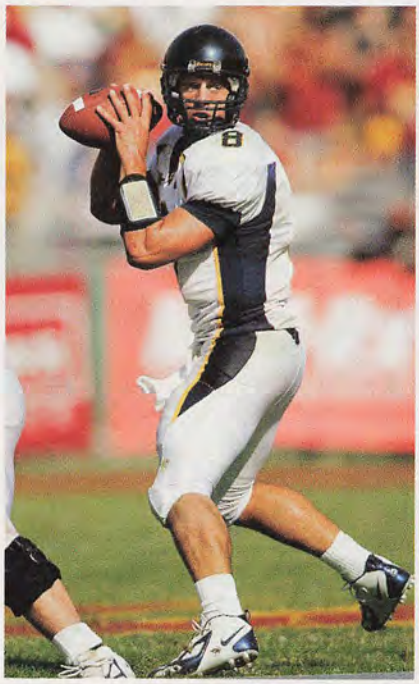
The Bears didn't screw up so much as the Trojans stepped up. After Rodgers marched Cal down to USC's nine with 1:47 to play, the Bears had four shots at the end zone. Rodgers threw an incomplete pass, was sacked for a five-yard loss by Manuel Wright, then missed on two more passes. The home team seemed not so much joyous in victory as relieved. Among the many Trojans who went out of their way to embrace Rodgers or shake his hand on the field was Mike Williams. What he said to the quarterback remained between them, but it might as well have been, See you in The Show.

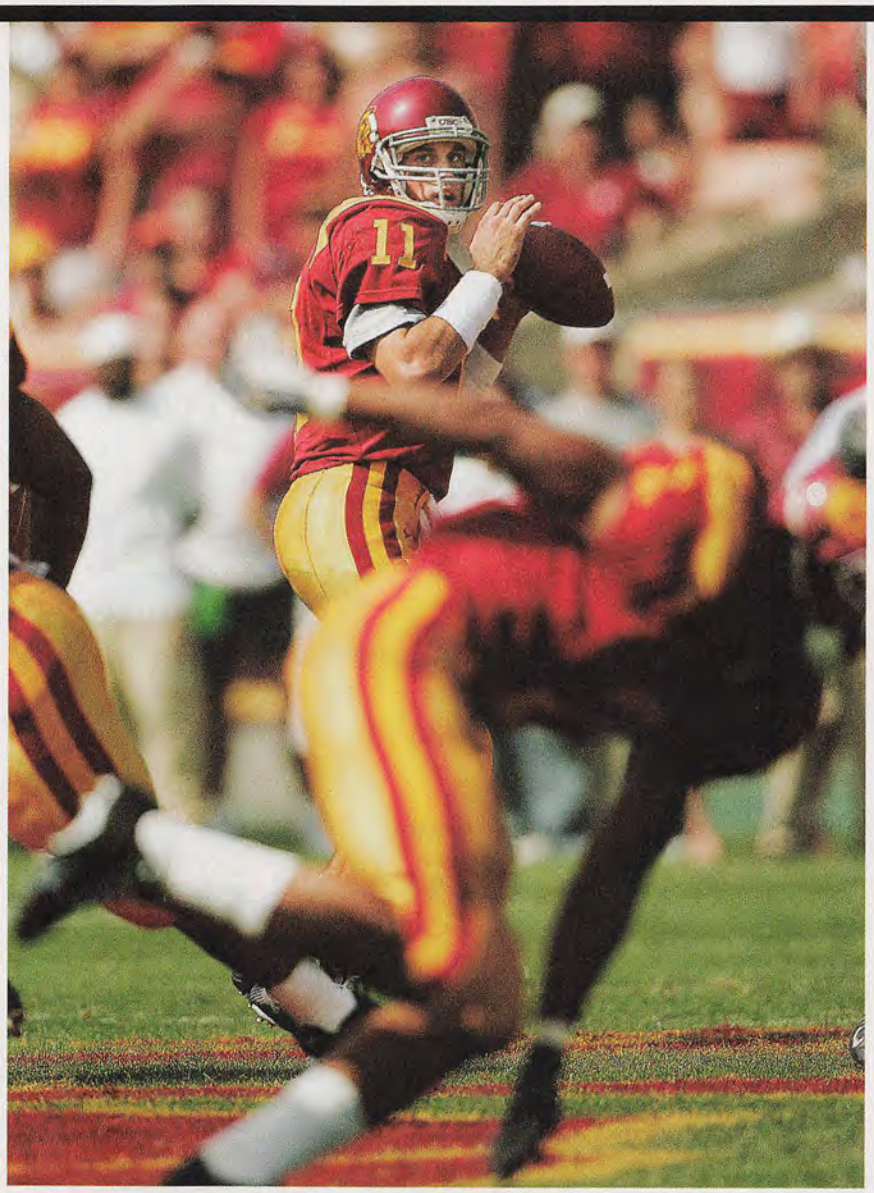
Nothing comes easy for USC. Next up is Arizona State, another well-coached, undefeated team with a red-hot quarterback, Andrew Walter. "We have to turn it around, get right after it this week," warned Carroll.

One final question, Coach. The Bears doubled your offensive output. J.J. Arrington rushed for 112 yards. Rodgers wrote his name in the record books. Considering this, how do you think you did in your one-on-one matchup with Tedford?

Carroll answered in two words:

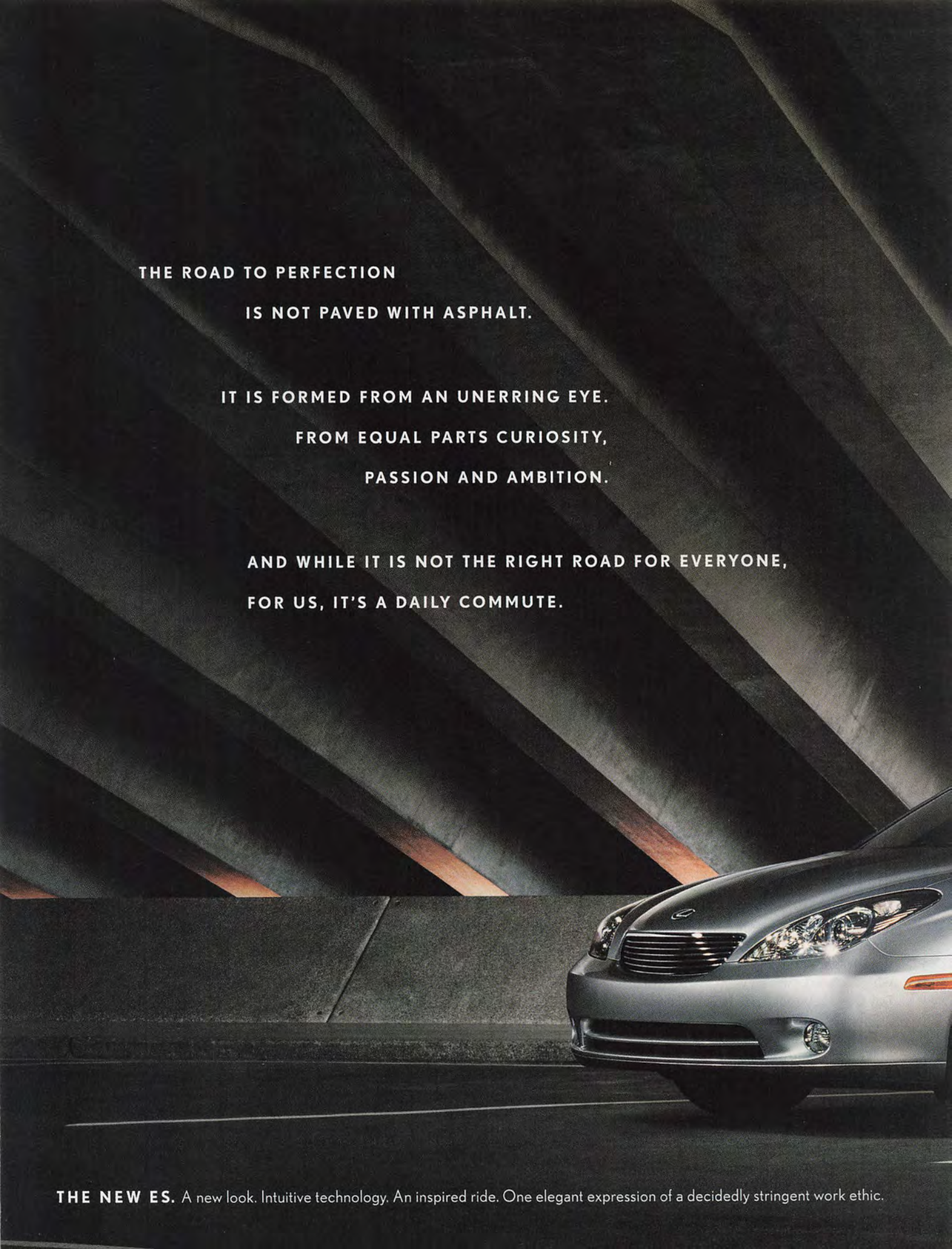
"We won." □





PASS AND FUTURE More than a dozen NFL scouts got a look as Rodgers (left) outplayed the more ballyhooed Leinart.

PETER READ MILLER (2)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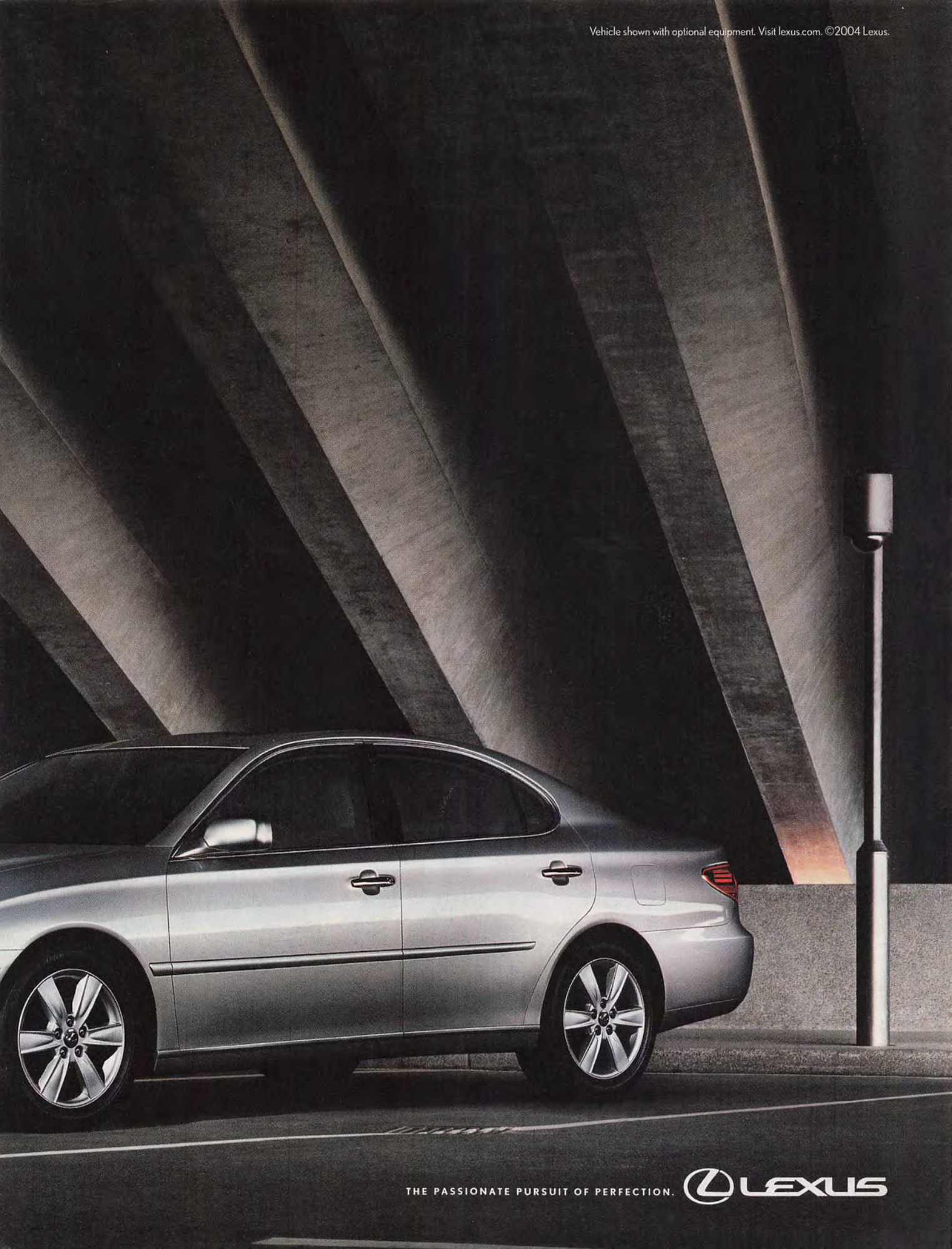
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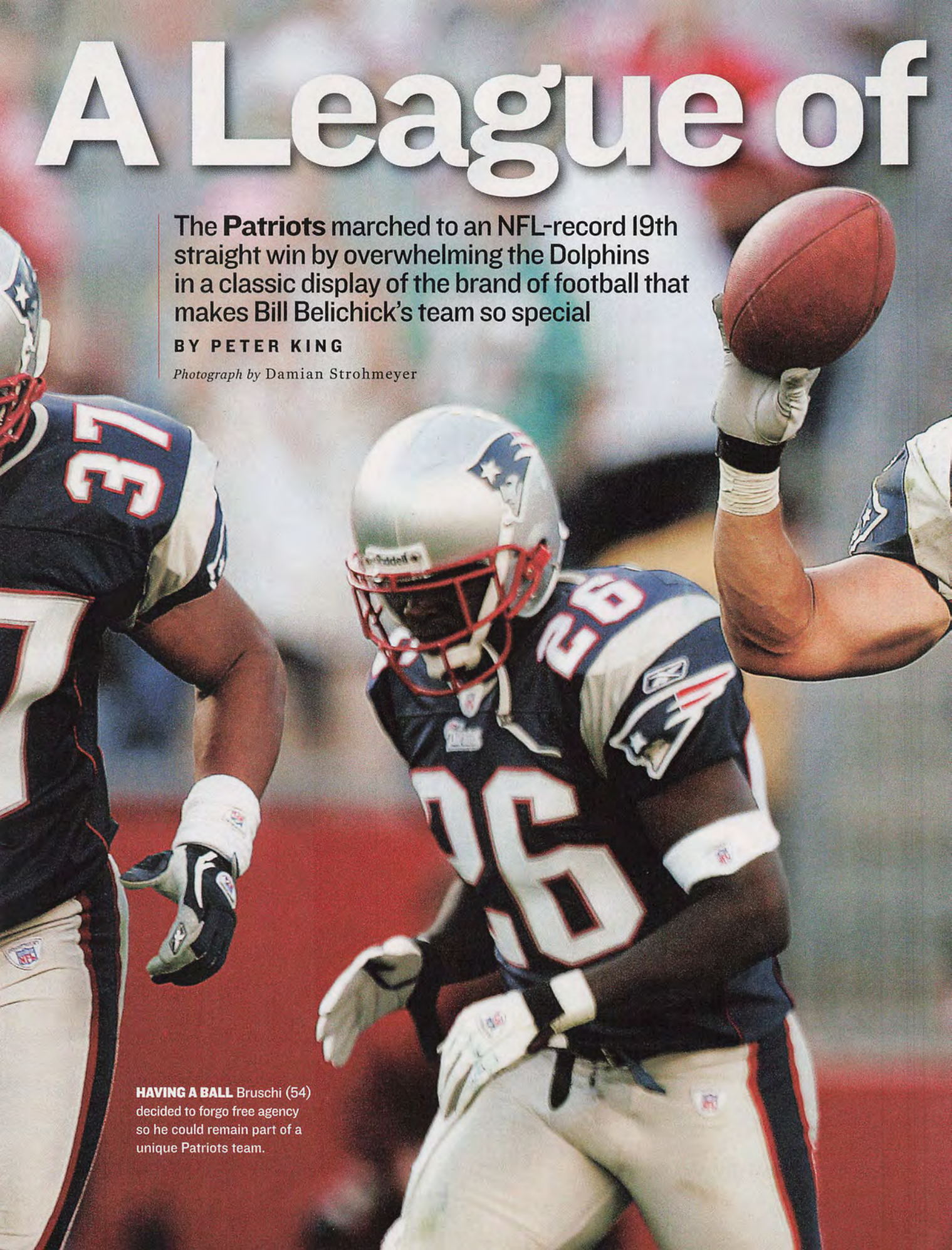
A League of

The **Patriots** marched to an NFL-record 19th straight win by overwhelming the Dolphins in a classic display of the brand of football that makes Bill Belichick's team so special

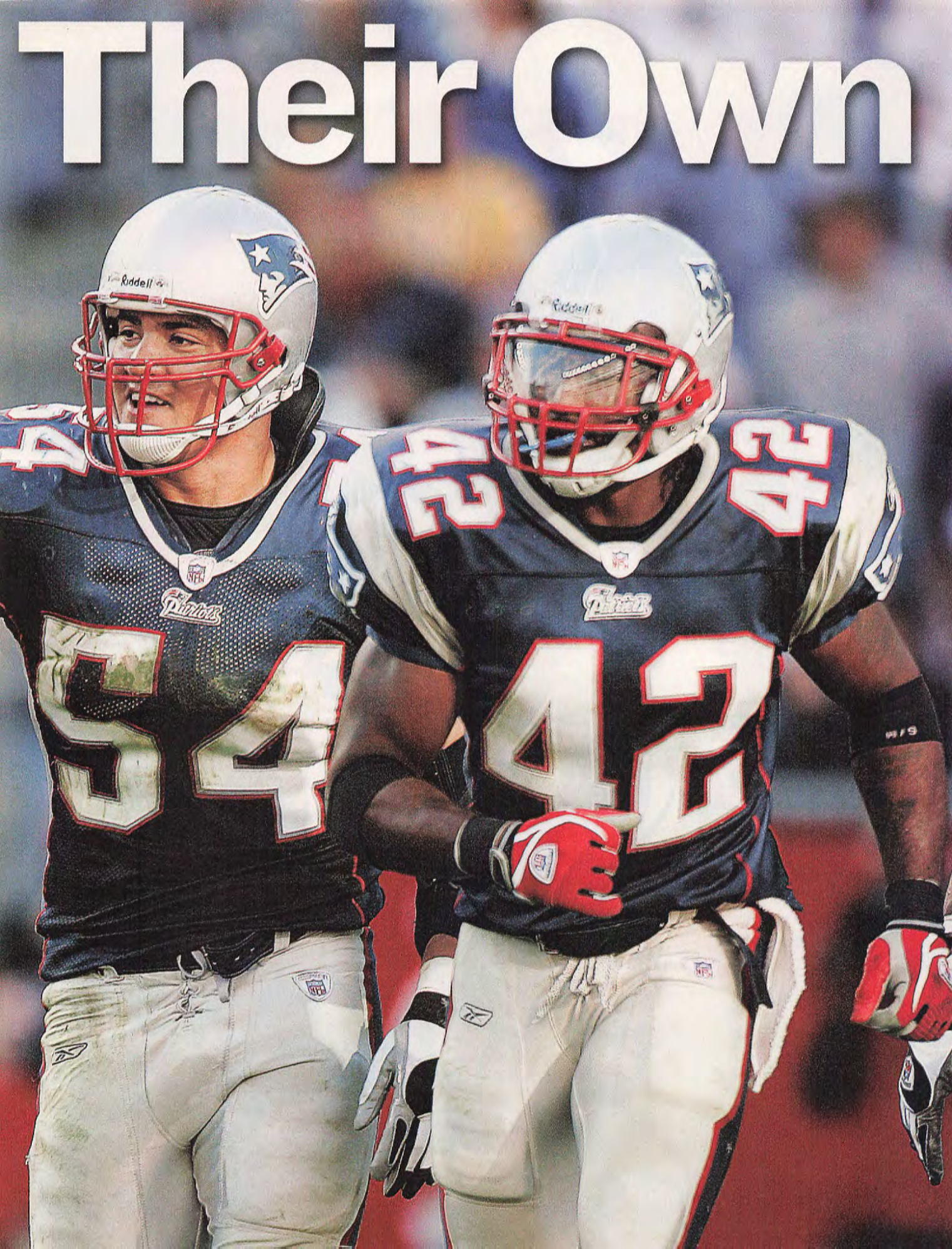
BY PETER KING

Photograph by Damian Strohmeyer



HAVING A BALL Bruschi (54) decided to forgo free agency so he could remain part of a unique Patriots team.

Their Own



GROUND GAIN Dillon, who ran for 94 yards against Miami, has given the Pats' rushing attack a boost.

THE COACH who strode to the front of the meeting room the day after the New England Patriots' Oct. 3 road win over the Buffalo Bills didn't look happy. Bill Belichick seldom does. But you'd figure there'd be a a hint of contentment, perhaps even a little smugness, after winning 18 in a row in a dog-eat-dog league that makes Microsoft versus Apple look like an intramural game.

Streak? What streak? Belichick told his players that they may have beaten the Bills by two touchdowns, but their special teams performance had been a disgrace. He told them that it was, in fact, the worst special teams performance he had seen in his 30 years of coaching: zero punt-return yards, a fumbled punt, a kickoff booted out-of-bounds, a 34-yard run by Bills punter Brian Moorman after he had dropped the snap on fourth-and-two and a 98-yard kickoff return for a Bills touchdown. As a result, Belichick announced, there would be changes on special teams. Backup safety Shawn Mayer, who'd missed a tackle on the touchdown return, was released. Starters—notably linebacker Tedy Bruschi and safety Rodney Harrison—would begin to take regular turns on the suicide squads.

"We can't go on like this if we want to be any good," Belichick told his team. "Things are going to change, starting this week. And there will be more changes if these don't work."

This is the kind of calculated ruthlessness, whacking a decent backup safety with the emotional detachment of a Paulie Walnuts, that Belichick employs when something is amiss with the Patriots. And make no mistake, the kicking game (25th in average punt return, 26th in opponent punt returns, 29th in opponent kick returns) was amiss. "You play for Belichick," says linebacker Mike Vrabel, "and every week's a tryout."

After a week of extra special teams meetings and practice, including repeated work on fake punts, New England showed marked improvement on Sunday. The Miami Dolphins advanced but one of five kickoffs past their 27-yard line. Dolphins punter Matt Turk tried to do what Moorman had done the week before but was stopped after a three-yard gain by Patrick Pass. If Pass hadn't gotten him, special teams captain Larry Izzo would have. "I was eyeballing Turk all the way," said Izzo. "There was no way any punter was making a play on us today."

That's only one of the reasons the Patriots keep on winning. They do whatever it takes. The intensely physical 24–10 win over the Dolphins gave New England its 19th consecutive victory (including three in the playoffs), the longest winning streak in the 85-year history of the NFL. Go ahead and debate whether the Patriots are as good as the perfect 1972 Dolphins *(box, page 71)* or could line up with Lombardi's Packers, or could slow Joe Montana's 49ers in their prime. All the Patriots know is what their Gatorade-soaked coach told them in a fairly businesslike locker room after the game: "You've done something no other team in NFL history has ever done."

THE LEADING EDGE Belichick keeps his players on their toes, while Brady is a master at directing the New England offense.

"Think how long it's been since we lost," said Patriots owner Bob Kraft. "Britney Spears has been married twice since then."

In fact New England hasn't been beaten since it suffered a 20–17 road loss to the Washington Redskins on Sept. 28, 2003. Last week one NFL pro scout said his team had approximately 60 players on its league-wide personnel board rated as "blue" (premier players). This scout rated quarterback Tom Brady and defensive end Richard Seymour *(page 72)* as the Patriots' only blue players. Six teams had more than two blues. New England led the league in "red" players, who are rated just below the blues. The scout's conclusion: New England wasn't good enough to overpower opponents but had enough talent, if coached well, to be a premier team in today's game.

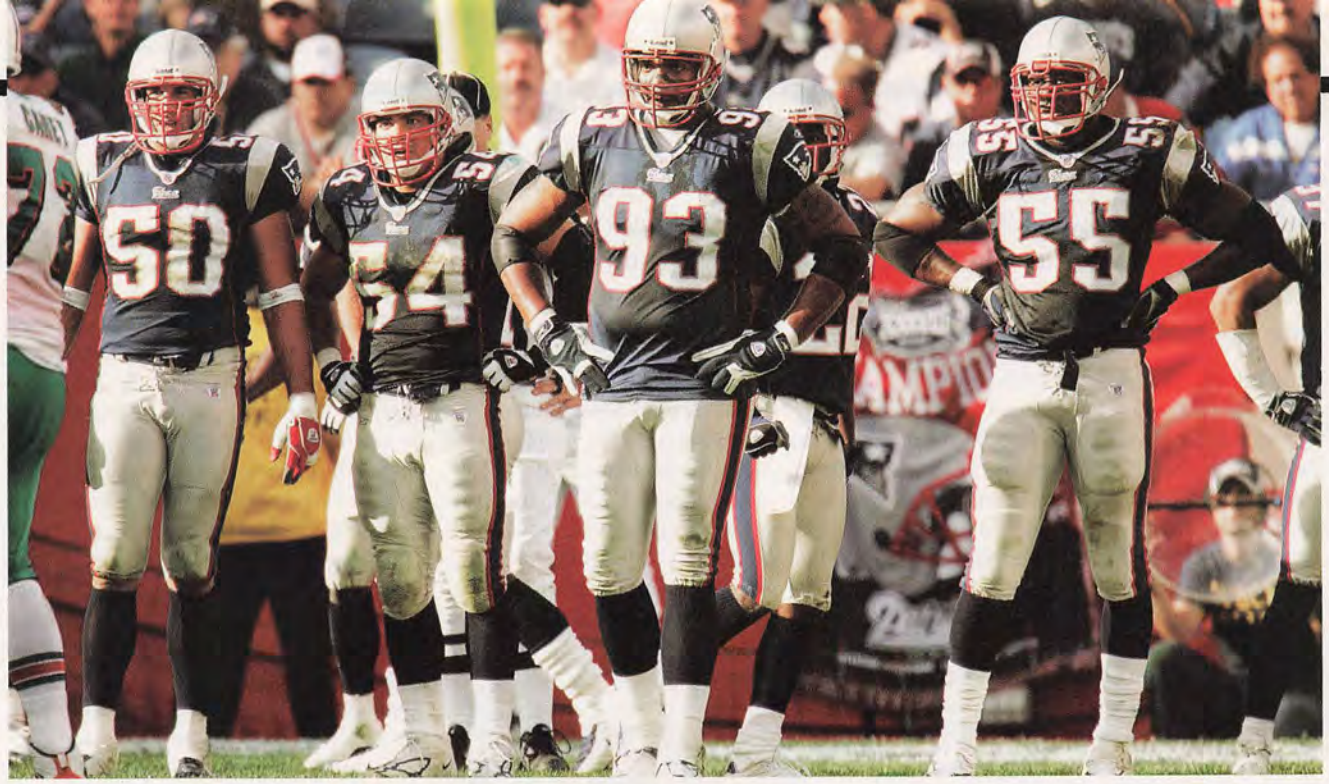
The most amazing thing about the run is the ever-changing Patriots' roster. This is Belichick's fifth year as coach. At the beginning of every season he has had at least 10 starters who weren't in the opening day lineup the previous year, including a dozen guys in '04 who were not in the lineup that opened the season for last year's title team. This year the Pats replaced their running back, the fullback, a wideout, three offensive linemen, the tight end, two defensive linemen, two linebackers and the free safety. By comparison, the lineup for the '72 Dolphins had only three changes from 1971. In '73 Miami changed two starters.

"I think the Patriots' accomplishment in this era of free agency puts their streak on top of all the others," says Ron Wolf, the former Packers general manager and one of the game's most respected talent evaluators. "The Patriots have to deal with so many factors that the teams of a generation ago never did. The secret in today's football is that guys who can coach and teach, like Bill Belichick and his staff, are invaluable. Because if you're really good today, you've got to replace a $10 million player with a $400,000 player almost every year, and the Cadillac has to keep running."

What the Patriots have done almost as well as coaching their established players is developing talent—and paying below-market prices to keep it. Top left tackles command more than $6 million a year; last week Matt Light, one of the top 10 players at his position, signed a six-year, $27 million deal. "It's going to be great playing with these guys for the next few years," Light says. "It's not always about being the highest-paid guy." Bruschi, one of the best defensive playmakers and leaders in the game, could have become a free agent after this season, but in June he signed a four-year, $8.12 million extension. That deal would make him the 12th highest-paid player on the Cincinnati Bengals. He doesn't care.

"You turn on the TV and watch the highlights," says Bruschi, "and you see a bunch of individuals making plays and celebrating as individuals. We don't play to make highlight shows. Watch how we celebrate—with our teammates. Always. You play the game to be on a team like this.

DAMIAN STROHMEYER (2)



TWO OF A KIND Like the '72 Dolphins (opposite), Seymour (93) and the Patriots play relentlessly on defense and like to pound opponents into submission.

Our attitude is we don't want to be good one to 22. We want to be good one to 53."

One to 22 led the way against Buffalo, win No. 18 in the streak. Down 24–17 the Bills had driven inside the New England 20 when Bruschi sacked and stripped Drew Bledsoe; Seymour picked up the loose ball and ran 68 yards for the clincher. The Bills blitzed on 42 of 56 plays and knocked Brady down nine times, but he wasn't sacked and threw no interceptions—while passing for 298 yards and two touchdowns. "No errant throws," marveled Bills defensive backs coach Steve Szabo. "People talk about Peyton Manning and Steve McNair. They're good, but I've been on the other side of the fence from all of them, and Brady's better."

The Patriots needed one to 53 on Sunday. The Dolphins beat the tar out of Brady—he left the stadium with four stitches above his chin and a swollen lower lip—but Corey Dillon (18 carries, 94 yards) picked up the slack on offense. Dillon, the former Bengal who was supposed to be an outlaw, took a $1.55 million pay cut after being acquired in an April trade. So far he has been a model citizen while running for 417 yards in four games. "Money couldn't buy me happiness anymore," says Dillon.

With Dillon sidelined for a spell in the third quarter by an ankle injury, Rabih Abdullah, a September waiver-wire pickup, plowed into the end zone with the first touchdown of his seven-year career. And two rookie defensive backs—safety Dexter Reid, a fourth-round pick out of North Carolina, and Randall Gay, a free agent out of LSU—came up with a fumble and an interception, respectively, to stop Miami drives. Gay, who played half the downs at nickelback on Sunday, might be the ultimate find for Scott Pioli, the Patriots' vice president of player personnel. Gay didn't even start for the Tigers' co-national championship team last season, but Pioli knew he was getting an athlete who had been battle-tested while playing for LSU coach Nick Saban, a former assistant under Belichick and a good friend.

Belichick is a student of the game like no other NFL coach; the library in his suburban Boston home has a wall of football-related books, from Amos Alonzo Stagg to Dave Meggyesy. In the locker room of this unique team on Sunday, Belichick finally paused to consider his accomplishment: The team he directs has done something George Halas, Paul Brown, Vince Lombardi and Bill Walsh never did—win 19 straight games.

Belichick smiled. "It's great to be in the history books," said the man who's read them all. □

Streakers

By virtue of their win over the Dolphins on Sunday, the Patriots have the longest winning streak in NFL history, but just as impressive is the record 48-game unbeaten string of a team that plays another kind of football: Arsenal owns the longest streak in English top-division soccer history. Here are the longest winning streaks in North American major sports.

Streak	League	Team
88	NCAA D-I BKB	UCLA Bruins (1971–74)
47	NCAA D-I FB	Oklahoma Sooners (1953–57)
33	NBA	Los Angeles Lakers (1971–72)
26	MLB	New York Giants (1916)
22	CFL	Calgary Stampeders (1948–49)
19	NFL	New England Patriots (2003–04)
17	NHL	Pittsburgh Penguins (1992–93)

JOHN BIEVER (TOP); DAMIAN STROHMEYER

WALTER IOOSS JR.

Perfect Argument

A member of the undefeated '72 Dolphins gives the Pats their due but reminds us that his team was special too

JIM MANDICH, *a tight end with the Dolphins for eight years, played in every game of Miami's 18–0 winning streak in 1972 and '73. As the analyst on the Dolphins' radio network, he has called three Patriots games during their record 19–0 run. He spoke about the two teams with SI senior writer Peter King.*

I looked at my 1972 Super Bowl ring last week, and the words WINNING EDGE are engraved on it. That was Coach [Don] Shula's signature expression. He'd say, "We've got to find an edge. Maybe we'll outwork them, or outwit them, or outwill them, or find a weakness we can exploit." He'd always find an edge that worked.

And I can imagine Bill Belichick watching tape to get an edge too. He will find your weakness, and that's where he will attack. In the NFL, when teams around the league are close in talent, the only way you excel is with coaching. I think that's the big reason why Miami and New England put together such long streaks.

We weren't the same type of team as the Patriots are—New England's more balanced. In a lot of the games during our streak we just bludgeoned people with our running game. When we went 17–0 in '72, we ran the ball 69% of the time and rushed for more than 200 yards a game. But when we needed to, we'd make a play in the passing game. In our third win of the streak, in the mud and the crud of Metropolitan Stadium in Minneapolis, we were down to the Vikings 14–6 in the second half. They were a brutally physical team, with the Purple People Eaters just beating people up. Garo Yepremian kicked the longest field goal of his life, 51 yards, and then Bob Griese hit me with a pass for the winning touchdown with 88 seconds left. I remember that because *The Miami Herald* headline the next day said something like, 88 CATCHES WINNING TD PASS WITH 88 SECONDS LEFT. That was the closest we came to losing during our streak.

We played the Browns in the first round of the playoffs, and we didn't think they were a very good team. But Cleveland threw a touchdown pass midway through the fourth quarter to go up 14–13, and we were steamed. On the sideline we were saying things like, "We're not going to blow this against the *Cleveland Browns*, are we? What the hell is going on?" But we had the goods.

After we won the Super Bowl, there was talk of the perfect season but not about the streak. Same thing the next year. We went to Oakland for the second game of the season, and it was a slugfest. I caught a balloon from Griese, thinking one of those crazy bastards [George] Atkinson or [Jack] Tatum was going to kill me, but I scored to make it 12–7 Oakland. We just couldn't punch it in again.

People ask whether it's tougher to do it in 2004 or in 1972. Why discredit either one? Each, in its own way, is an unprecedented accomplishment. A perfect NFL season is unique, period. That Miami team stands alone in NFL history, and none of us had any idea that our perfect season would still be relevant and still be the measuring stick for greatness. But there were some pretty bad teams in those days, and today there are no slappies. The Patriots don't get any weeks off. Winning more consecutive games than any other team is an accomplishment on a scale of what the Dolphins did.

In 1972, and throughout much of the '70s, I played with the same quarterback, mostly the same line, most of the same key defensive players. We could hold onto our stars. The Patriots rent [safety] Rodney Harrison for a couple of years, and he plays at a high level. They find [linebacker] Mike Vrabel and make him an impact player. They draft brilliantly—Tom Brady in the sixth round? They see things in players that other teams don't.

I watch the Patriots win 19 in a row in this era, and I say, "Boys, hold your heads high. You're traveling in uncharted waters." Just like the '72 Dolphins did. □

Three Days, One Life

The Patriots' All-Pro defensive tackle, **Richard Seymour**, followed the beacon of football from high school to college to the NFL. In one weekend of games you can learn a lot about the man

BY CHARLES P. PIERCE

YOU CAN SEE the arc of one man's life by the lights in the hills. There's a small glow in the hillocks of South Carolina, then a great burst behind the Appalachians where they peter out in central Georgia, and then this huge explosion in the low rises of southern Massachusetts, where the trees are incandescent now anyway, as they run toward the sea. ¶ But how does this man find his way to this place: the opening night of the NFL season, with fireworks and championship banners and the Boston Pops and with rings being handed out that look like something Montezuma got out of his gumball machine? There's Toby Keith! There's Elton John! And, of course, there are the New England Patriots, the defending Super Bowl champions. And there is a football game, same as it ever was, at the center of a life that began in a place where the brightest lights were the ones at the stadium.

The lights don't shine just at night. They shine in the mind during the high-summer days of training camp and through all the tedious, grinding practices. The lights are the payoff. They are there on the day of the game, when the stadium is filling and the bands are playing. Make a life in this game, and, even in the middle of the day, the lights shine for you.

"I was talking with my kids about this the other day—I don't think you ever come home from practice thinking, Boy, that was a great football practice," muses Patriots coach Bill Belichick, who has been more successful than anyone recently at understanding the people who play this game. "I played lacrosse, and I used to love practice because you got to play. Football is preparation, preparation, preparation, and then you get one chance to play. It's all about that: the game itself. It's a big social event in many places, and it's center stage."

Richard Seymour plays for Bill Belichick as a defensive lineman. He's 6' 6" and weighs 310 pounds, and he has made the Pro Bowl twice in his three seasons with New England. He is broad-faced and soft-spoken, at 25 still youthful in his face and in his walk—he is not yet afflicted by that orthopedic list that eventually comes to almost everyone who plays in the NFL—and he is incontrovertibly of the American South. "I got a place here," he says of New England, "but I'm still a Southerner. I'm a country guy. You come up here, and it's, I don't know, a little bit ruder. Everyone's honking the horn. Everything's in a hurry. I'm more laid-back. When I have to do it, I can get rowdy."

He has been a star everywhere he's played: at Lower Richland High School in Hopkins, S.C., and at Georgia and now in New England, where he anchored the defense that edged the Carolina Panthers in the Super Bowl in Houston last February. Moreover, he's been a captain everywhere he's played—as a Diamond Hornet and as a Bulldog and as a Patriot. When Seymour's stats fell off a bit at the beginning of this season, Belichick, who hands out public compliments sparingly, leaped to his defense. "I feel like, if I have a problem, I can go to him, and if he has a problem, he can come to me," says Belichick. "He's one of the captains. He's part of the decision-making apparatus on this team."

"I always had talent, but I was always a work in progress," Seymour says. "The thing was, when I went out there against good competition, I was one of the guys people could count on."

So let's walk through the places where he built his résumé, the competitive c.v. of Richard Vershaun Manning Seymour, on one weekend as autumn begins the slow bend toward winter. One weekend: a high school game on Friday, a big college game on Saturday and an NFL matchup on Sunday in which Seymour and the Patriots will try to win their 19th consecutive game, more than any other team ever has won. Walk toward the lights in the hills and see what they illuminate.

FRIDAY, Oct. 8

Richland Northeast 34, Lower Richland 0

COREY WRIGHT knows that they still talk about the old days here, when coach Mooney Player and the Diamond Hornets ran the table on the rest of the schools in and around Richland County, S.C. There was the undefeated 1965 team and another one two years later and the 1972 bunch that finished No. 1 in the state. Nobody called it Lower Richland High back then. Everybody called it the Creek. "Can't beat the Creek!" they'd chant, despite the fact that there is no creek anywhere near the place.

That's all long gone. "Now," says Wright, in his first season as Lower Richland's coach, "it's just a matter of trying to rebuild."

The Diamond Hornets played for the state title in 1991, but that was their last great team. They won only one game last season. And in August they were dealt the most devastating blow imaginable. Shortly after practice, a 15-year-old freshman named Darryl Cornish collapsed on the way to his mother's car. Firemen from the station across the road got there as quickly as they could, but it didn't matter. The autopsy showed that Cornish died of heatstroke complicated by an enlargement of his heart. "He was showered and dressed," says Wright, picking his words as though they might shatter as he spoke them. "He fell, right there, right in front of me."

Darryl's number was retired before the first game of the season, in which Lower Richland beat Dreher 19–13. It was the Diamond

SWARMING THE FIELD Eight years after Seymour (above) starred at his position, Dinkins (88) led the Hornets out against the Cavaliers.

AL TIELEMANS (HORNETS); THE STATE

Hornets' first win in more than a year. A few weeks before the game Richard Seymour had come down and spoken to them. "It was important for these guys to see him," Wright says, "and to know that he'd walked these halls and that if they have dreams, they have to persevere. I think the team pulled together well. We've had a lot of near misses where we could have turned a corner and didn't."

The team bus rolls out of the parking lot behind the field just as dusk begins to fall. Darryl Cornish's number stays behind.

IT ALL STARTS with education, and with the days when separate was most assuredly not equal. Back then the black families in Richland sent their children to Hopkins High School, where they ran into Mr. William Manning Seymour. He taught all of them math and science whether they wanted to learn it or not.

Seymour even taught his own grandson, Richard, a high-spirited youngster who would marry a schoolmate named Deborah Wider. In 1979 they had a boy whom they named Richard Vershaun Manning, after his grandfather and great-grandfather. Deborah remembers her only son as a gentle child who was born at 10 pounds and never stopped gaining. In fact, by the time he wanted to play football, Richard was too heavy for his age group and too young to play with kids his size.

"I really wanted to play because my father and all my uncles had played," Seymour recalls, "but I couldn't play until my ninth-grade year." He played basketball and even took up karate for a while. Mostly, though, he stuck with his parents. Even though his father and mother separated when Richard was in grade school, they made it a point to be around together. Richard and his father grew inseparable. In the summer Richard worked for his father's construction business.

When he got to Lower Richland in 1992, he was still chubby, but during his sophomore year he sprouted up and was finally ready to play football for the Diamond Hornets, who were at the beginning of the long post-Mooney slide. "We didn't have a very good record when I was there," Seymour says, "but just to go there, you know? Friday nights at the stadium were such a big deal."

No matter how the team was playing, Mary Kirkland, who'd learned her math and science from William Seymour and who was now the assistant principal of Lower Richland, always was at the games. She became particularly fond of the great-grandson of her old teacher. "Young Richard was very studious and focused," she recalls. She also remembers how close Richard was to his parents, how his father and mother came to the games together and how more than a few people thought they were still married.

Richard became a star his senior year and played well in the annual Shrine Bowl between teams of graduating players from North and South Carolina. His father handled the college recruiters who came to call. The two Seymours became most fond of Rodney Garner, a former Arena Football League player who was Georgia's defensive line coach. For his part Garner was amazed by the closeness of the father and son. "I've never seen a relationship like that between a young man and his father," he says. "I never had that kind of relationship. Tell you the truth, I was a little envious."

But then everyone loved the older Richard Seymour. He was happy and bubbly, and he bragged about his son almost as often as he bragged about his own cooking. "He always said he was the best cook in South Carolina, and he said he'd have to be the best cook in Georgia, too," says Deborah Seymour. Both parents were present when Richard made the commitment to the Bulldogs in the media center of Lower Richland. Mary Kirkland was there too. "We all posed for pictures," she recalls. "It was such a happy time."

Garner, the Georgia assistant, was amazed by the closeness of Richard and his dad. "I've never seen a relationship like that between a young man and his father," he says. "Tell you the truth, I was a little envious."

NEAR THE END of the game, a freshman running back named Lucas Archie, a classmate of the late Darryl Cornish, is belted by several Richland Northeast Cavaliers, and he has to be helped off the field. Then, as time runs out and the Diamond Hornets gather under the goalposts for Coach Wright to chew them out, Archie falls to his knees.

They all look in his direction, and you can see them freeze—the coaches with the initials DLC on the sleeves of their golf shirts and the players in their uniforms and the kids in the DLC 77 FOREVER T-shirts. They all stand motionless in the middle of Harry Parone Stadium until the freshman rises again.

"I got a ninth-grader over there, and I hope he can get through his black-and-blue tomorrow," Wright says, and there is a deep resonance to the phrase *ninth-grader* on this struggling football team.

Northeast is one of the best teams in Lower Richland's area, and the Diamond Hornets have actually played the Cavaliers even since a horrific first quarter in which they fell behind 20–0. Everything that makes high school football coaches nuts has happened to Wright. Six times quarterback Travis Malloy has gone deep down the sideline, and six times the ball has slipped through his open receiver's fingers. His team has been on the wrong end of two ghastly interference calls that resulted in first downs for Northeast and then in scores. But the pivotal play comes with 7:52 left in the game, when a Northeast wideout lines up as the punter, catches the snap on the hop and runs through the entire Lower Richland team for a 61-yard touchdown. "It just seems the craziest things happen when you're struggling like we are," Wright says after the game. "That's going to happen until we learn to take advantage of our opportunities."

Robert Dinkins plays where Richard Seymour used to play for Lower Richland. He's a wide receiver and a defensive end, and three of the near-miss long passes went off his fingertips. He also made a clean open-field tackle of the Northeast quarterback. "Coach put me in a place where I can rush," he says. "I like to rush." All the while, his eyes keep cutting over to the bench, where trainers are attending to Lucas Archie. Dinkins was at practice the day that Darryl Cornish died. The tragedy, he says, has marked the team.

"That just took the heart right out of us," Dinkins says. "We're young. That kind of thing isn't supposed to happen to us yet." On the

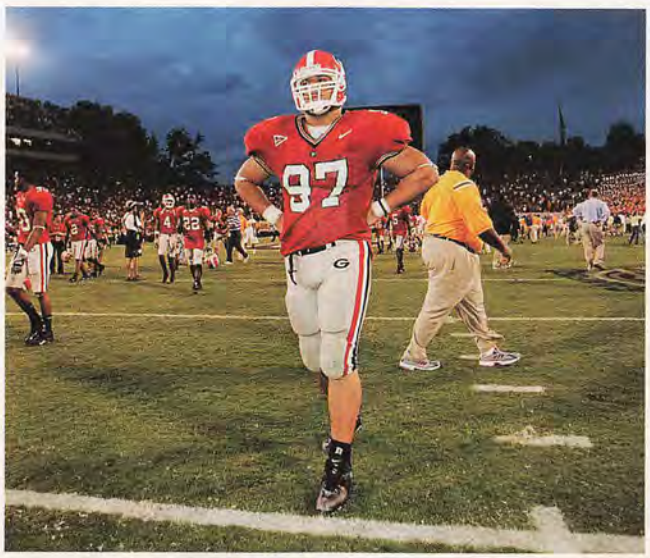
sideline Archie gets up slowly and climbs onto a small truck that will take him to a team bus, and something serious leaves the place with the Diamond Hornets as the buses disappear into the night.

SATURDAY, Oct. 9

Tennessee 19, Georgia 14

WHEN THE BULLDOG dies, they put him in a crypt in the southwest corner of Sanford Stadium, just below the bridge that bustles with traffic three hours before Georgia comes out to play Tennessee. These days Georgia is on UGA VI, and UGAs I–V are entombed there in marble vaults with their epitaphs written on bronze plaques. You can say all you want about the romance of the Arch, or the Chapel Bell, or the Redcoat Band, but this is the essence of football at Georgia. Not only do they number their mascots as though they were popes, but they bury them that way too.

It's a pivotal afternoon for the Bulldogs. A week ago they stunned defending national co-champion LSU here in Athens, 45–16. Georgia is ranked third in the country and is aiming higher than that. It has a brutal stretch later in the season when it plays four straight games on the road, including at Florida and Auburn, so beating Tennessee today is essential. The tents come out early along Lumpkin Street, which is raucous and jammed long before kickoff.



FEELING UPSET With Golston (97) playing in the spot once manned by Seymour (top left), the Bulldogs were muzzled by the Volunteers.

"Someday," Kedric Golston said earlier in the week, "I'll bring my grandchildren here and show them everything. I mean, 90,000 people. How can you not want to do this?" Golston, a 6' 4", 300-pound junior, plays defensive tackle for the Bulldogs, as Seymour did. Garner is his position coach. Golston is broad-faced and soft-spoken, so he reminds everyone of Seymour. "They call me Little Mo," Golston says, "because I guess I favor him a little bit."

When he visited the university from Sandy Creek High School in Tyrone, Ga., Golston saw Seymour practice, along with Marcus Stroud and the rest of a formidable Georgia defense. "I'd go out and watch him do drills," Golston says. "I saw him work, and that's one of the main reasons I decided to come here. I hung out with him a few times. He was so much older than me, but even now me and a couple of DTs, we'll go in and watch his films, see if we can pick anything up."

Mainly, though, Golston came to Georgia to play on afternoons like this one and to learn from Garner. "Like they say, the proof's in the pudding," Golston says. "You got to listen to what he says when you see the success Richard's having up there in New England."

GARNER, THE FATHER of six girls, looked at Richard Seymour as the son he never had, and Seymour looked at Garner as a big brother. "Every Thanksgiving that Richard was here," Garner says, "the Seymours came to my house. We'd always be around, because we play Georgia Tech that weekend every year."

Seymour's career at Georgia did not begin well. The week of his first game, against South Carolina, he discovered that the team had no game shoes that fit him. "I just figured, you know, this was college, and the trainers would have some," he recalls. "I'd been wearing some shoes from high school all during summer camp." The staff managed to borrow a pair from the South Carolina team, but those were the wrong shade of red. "They were more of a burgundy," Seymour says.

"He had such a big foot that we didn't have any that fit," says Jim Donnan, now an ESPN college football analyst, who coached Seymour at Georgia. "And he didn't want to wear a pair that didn't look like all the other players'." So they spray-painted the borrowed shoes Georgia red, and, at 17, Richard Seymour's college career began.

He took to college life almost as enthusiastically as he did to college football. He was still dating Tanya Winston, whom he'd met when they were juniors at Lower Richland, and he was becoming a star in a place where it is a very good thing to be a football star. He stayed the full four years, even though people told him that he could have been drafted as a junior.

"I wouldn't trade my college experience for anything," he says. "I even enjoyed going to class, and I enjoyed the atmosphere. You know, you're on your own, but you're not really on your own. It's not like 'Welcome to the real world,' but it's a good prep test."

He developed a coterie of friends including Demetric Evans, his roommate for four years, and an offensive lineman named Jonas Jennings, who now plays for the Buffalo Bills. (On Oct. 3, when Jennings was knocked cold in a game against the Patriots in Buffalo, Seymour stayed with him, talking to him, until Jennings left the field.)

Seymour stood out even on a team that featured future NFL players Stroud and Champ Bailey, and he worked as hard as any of them. "He was such a young guy coming out that we thought about redshirting him," Donnan says. "He was very mobile for a guy that big."

"He always showed unbelievable character," Garner says. "He wanted to be the best, and he showed that from Day One."

Truth be told, during the four years that Seymour played at Georgia, the Bulldogs underachieved. Their best year was Seymour's first, when they went 10–2, but his postseasons comprise two Outback Bowls, a Peach Bowl and an O'ahu Bowl. The Bull-

AL TIELEMANS (GOLSTON); COURTESY OF UGA SPORTS COMMUNICATIONS

dogs won them all, but that was still not good enough to keep Donnan from getting fired after Seymour's senior season.

One of Richard's parents made every game, and they went together to every game but two, even though Deborah never has made peace with what football can do to the boys and men who play it.

"Every game, still, there's the nail-biting, and your heart hurts," she says. "Every game he plays, we always put it in God's hands. Last thing I always say to him is to play safe."

The Seymours never ceased to amaze Garner. On the road they were the first people he saw in the lobby of the Georgia hotel, and after home games, outside Sanford Stadium, it was their tent to which all the Georgia players flocked. Richard's father had not been lying about his cooking. The Seymours were so omnipresent that Evans never realized they were separated. "Demetric told me, 'All that time, I never knew. When y'all came here, you were a family,' " Deborah says. "These are the sacrifices you make for your children. You put all that other stuff aside."

WITH 24 SECONDS left in the third quarter and his team trailing 13–7, Golston goes to his hands and knees. He's not hurt, but he is determined to buy some time. "That was just, you know, technique," he'll explain later.

They are playing in a din that overwhelms even the startlingly strange repertoires of the competing marching bands. (Tennessee's has a weakness for the more obscure pages of the Led Zeppelin catalogue, while Georgia's rouser is a variation on *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, which first came here as the fight song of the Union army that burned down the state.) But for all its boisterous home field advantage, Georgia has spent most of the afternoon stuck in neutral.

The Bulldogs gave up enough big plays early to fall behind 19–7. But they rallied behind freshman tailback Danny Ware to cut the lead to 19–14, and their last drive takes them all the way from their own 13 to the Tennessee 19 with one second left. But David Greene's pass is batted down in the end zone, and an undefeated season vanishes into the ether. Almost to a man, scattered all over the field, the Bulldogs drop to their knees.

"Too much, too early," Golston says as his teammates drift away and out of the stadium. "We'd stop them on first and second down and then break down on third. There's nothing much we can do now except take care of Georgia. We can't be worrying about anyone else."

Somewhere, out among the tents that have fallen quiet in the narrow streets that wind through campus, Golston's family is waiting for him. "It's hard, but it's all right," he says. "They understand, you know? They're family. They understand."

SUNDAY, Oct. 10

Patriots 24, Dolphins 10

STILL RATHER NEW to success, New England is in its third season of unbridled giddiness over this football business. An operation once so threadbare that it played a home game in Alabama is now the NFL's signature franchise. The stadium in Foxboro, Mass., is always full, the fans are several levels above adoring, and even the notoriously sour Boston sports media seem to be in a permanent swoon. And on this cloudy afternoon, facing the crumbling remnants of the Miami Dolphins, the Patriots are trying to do something that no other team has done.

Richard Seymour's season has begun slowly. Now a recognized defensive star, he's faced double and triple teams, and his statistics don't measure up to the standard he set for himself in 2003. In the team's first three games he managed only three tackles and one sack. He was sufficiently invisible that Belichick made a point of defending him publicly. "Not everybody gets the same number of opportunities every week," Belichick said. "He's our best lineman, and he's playing well. His production will come." What Belichick didn't mention—but what everybody around the Patriots knew—was that this season is different from any other season Seymour has known. There is a dark place deep in its heart, and the people who know it understand how fragile everything about him has become.

WRAPPED FISH Seymour sacked Fiedler in the first quarter as the Patriots took down the Dolphins for their record 19th straight win.

Last April 25, almost three months after he and the rest of the Patriots got to hoist the unwieldy silver andiron that the NFL bestows upon its champions, Richard Seymour was getting ready to marry Winston, his longtime girlfriend. The wedding was going to be in Orlando, and it was going to be huge.

Seymour had arrived as a pro. He'd come to the Patriots as the sixth pick in the draft. He'd had only 1½ sacks as a senior at Georgia, but Belichick and the Patriots are known for looking deeper than the numbers. "When you watched him, you could see he was a good player," says Belichick. "But when you spent time with him, you could see his maturity. He was just a real solid kid, professionally and personally."

Over his three seasons in New England, Seymour had done more than justify the faith the team had shown in him. By 2003 he was a defensive captain, and in the Super Bowl it was he who'd fallen on a crucial fumble by Carolina quarterback Jake Delhomme. His mother still came to every game she could, even though she wasn't that big a fan of football in the northern latitudes. His father, however, was as much a presence as he'd been at Georgia games.

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But on April 25, as Seymour was planning his wedding, Lynn Mack was on the back porch of a house on Traveler Lane back in Columbia, S.C. She was watching over the beer for her friend Coretta Myers, 36, who was having a cookout. It was a loud and rowdy time. At one point a guest walked in on a blazing row that Myers was having with the older man she'd been seeing, Richard Seymour. He stormed out of the house. "I thought he'd gone home," says Mack.

At about one o'clock in the morning, a Ford Explorer came barreling down the street. Standing in front of the house with Myers and another friend, Valerie Wilson, Mack thought the police were coming to bust the party. Seymour got out of the truck. Something shone in his hand.

"Oh, my God," said Wilson, "he's got a gun."

"I was in a state of shock," Mack recalls. "Coretta started running away from him. Valerie was going, 'Run, Coretta, run!' "

Seymour and Myers disappeared down the street. Mack heard gunshots and then silence. A few houses away, the police found Richard Seymour and Coretta Myers dead in the backyard. Seymour had shot Myers several times and then turned the gun on himself.

The event was unfathomable even to the people who knew Seymour best. "Not in a million years did I expect that from him," Mack says. "I knew she asked him to leave, but I never expected that."

"I could not believe it when I got the call," Garner recalls. "I talked to Richard a couple of times a day, just trying to be there for him. I mean, he was planning his wedding."

Richard was devastated by the loss of his father. Gradually, though, the community that had formed during his career, all the people who had laughed with his father at all those games and in all those hotel lobbies, gathered around him. At the funeral, a huge delegation from Lower Richland came, as did Garner. Jonas Jennings, Richard's friend who plays for Buffalo, was there. And not only did Richard's Patriots teammates come down, but so did Belichick, team owner Robert Kraft and most of the front office. "It helped Richard so," says his mother. "As he told me before he left for camp in July, he's not questioning God. He knows everything happens for a reason, but right now he just doesn't understand the reason yet. It's going to take some healing. Won't be today. Won't be tomorrow."

He plays this season with a survivor's pain. It's like a radio signal in the mountains, wavering in its intensity, from an ache to an almost unbearable scream. "It changes you," Seymour says, his voice low and his words excruciatingly precise. "It's day to day. That's progress, because some days are better than others. Game days, though—game days are tough."

BANNER NIGHT Dad was on hand when Richard received Georgia's MVP award in 1999.

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THE GAME IS put away. The Dolphins are put away. In fact, in the final two minutes, both Miami quarterbacks are put away in quick succession. Patriots safety Rodney Harrison sends Jay Fiedler to the sideline, and then linebacker Roosevelt Colvin smacks A.J. Feeley amidships. Not long after that, with their 19th consecutive win in the bag, Harrison and Seymour, in a decidedly un-Patriotic move, dump a bucket of Gatorade on Belichick's head.

The game was a rock fight from the start. Seymour tackled Fiedler deep in Miami territory for his second sack of the season, and that led eventually to the first New England touchdown. But given all that's happened this year, the most striking moment of the day comes when Seymour helps douse his coach in that silly ritual, and joy bursts upon his face like the sun through the clouds.

"Football is a part of my life, but my life is also part of the lives of the people I know, and their lives are a part of mine," says Seymour. "It's all together, and that's a good thing. That's the way it's supposed to be."

You can see how it works if you trace a life given to this game. You can see pep bands give way to orchestras and concrete bleachers give way to luxury suites. You can even see titled canines give way to aging rock stars. The stage gets bigger, and the crowds get louder. But you can see how the lights draw power from the shadows. □

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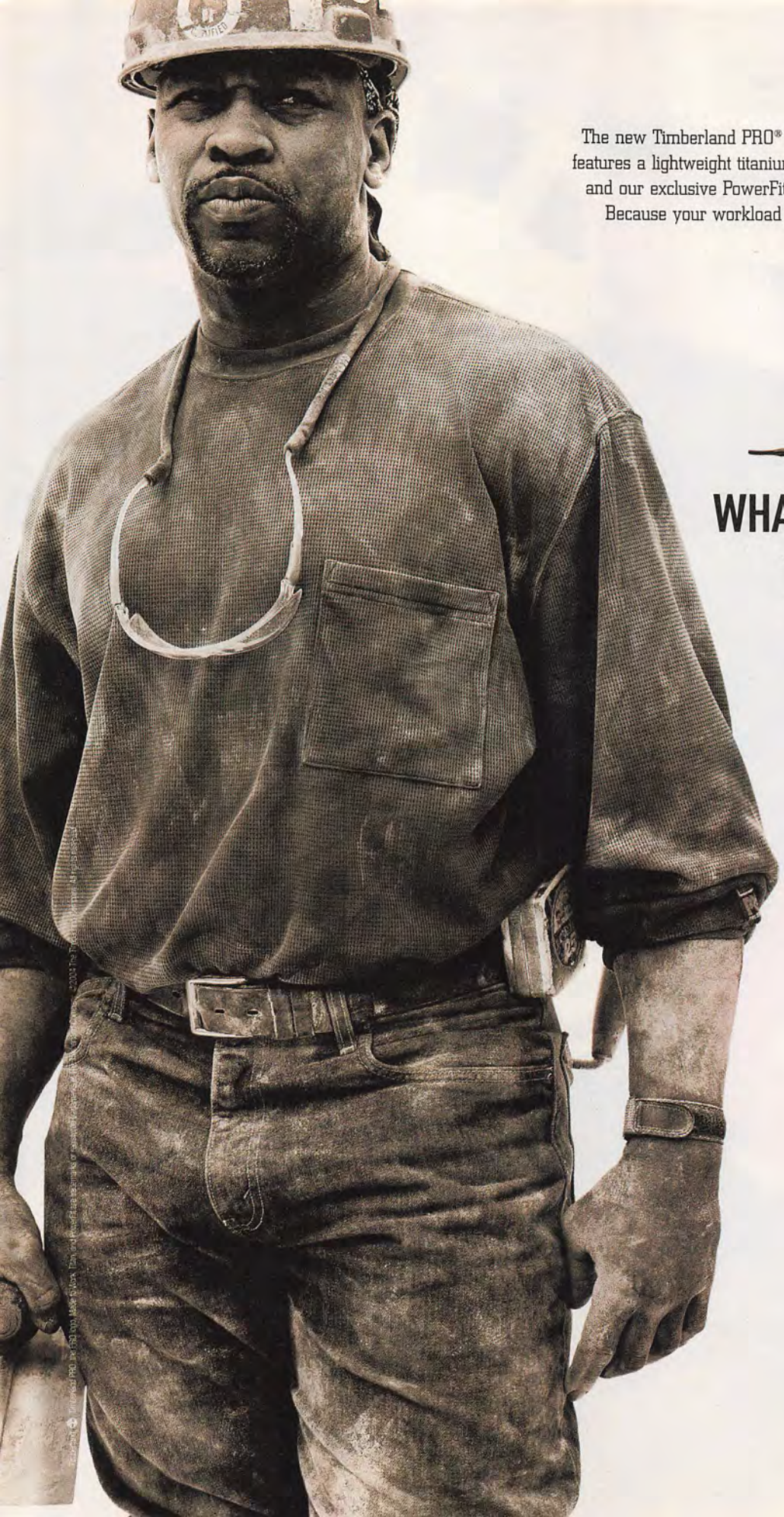

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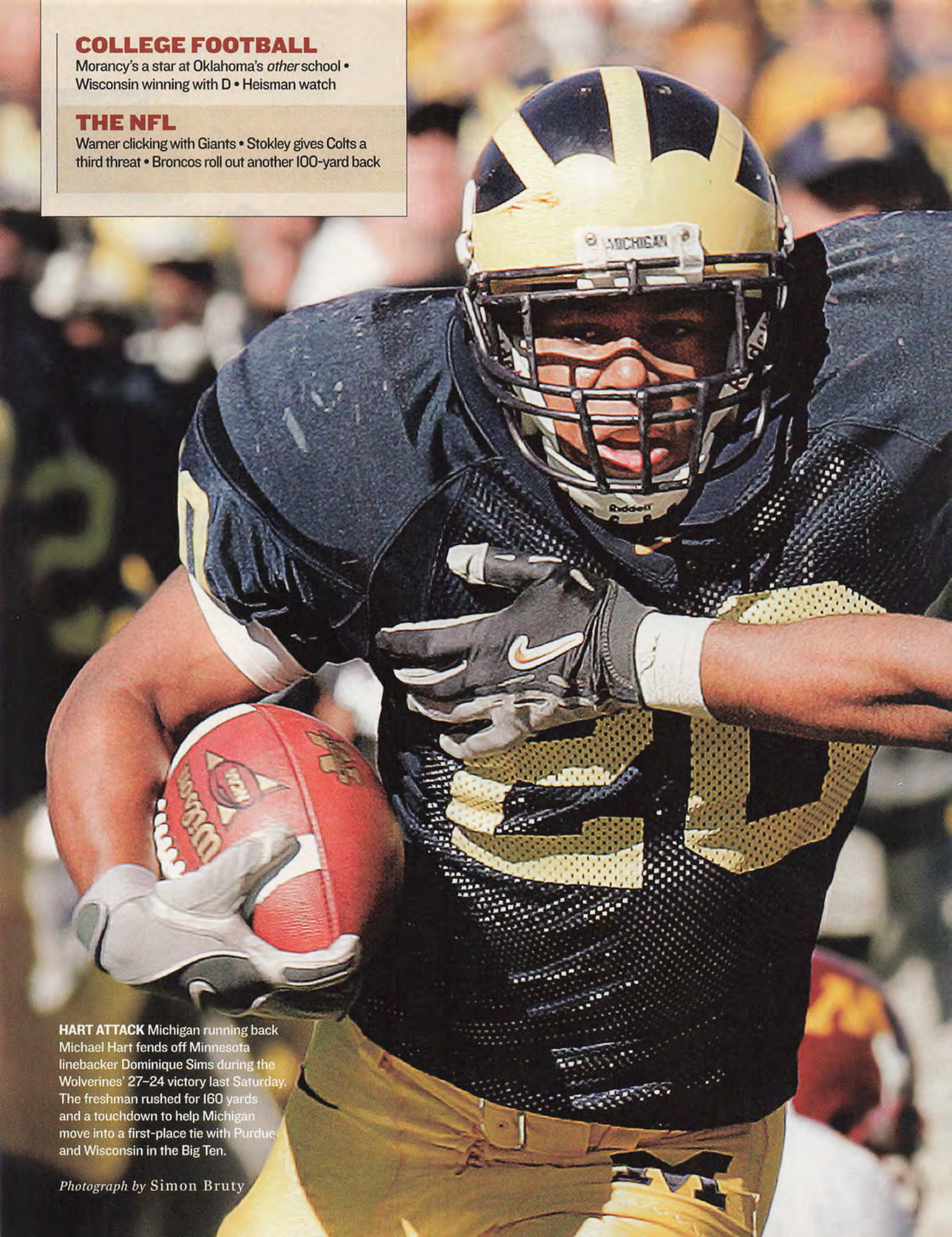
COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Morancy's a star at Oklahoma's *other* school • Wisconsin winning with D • Heisman watch

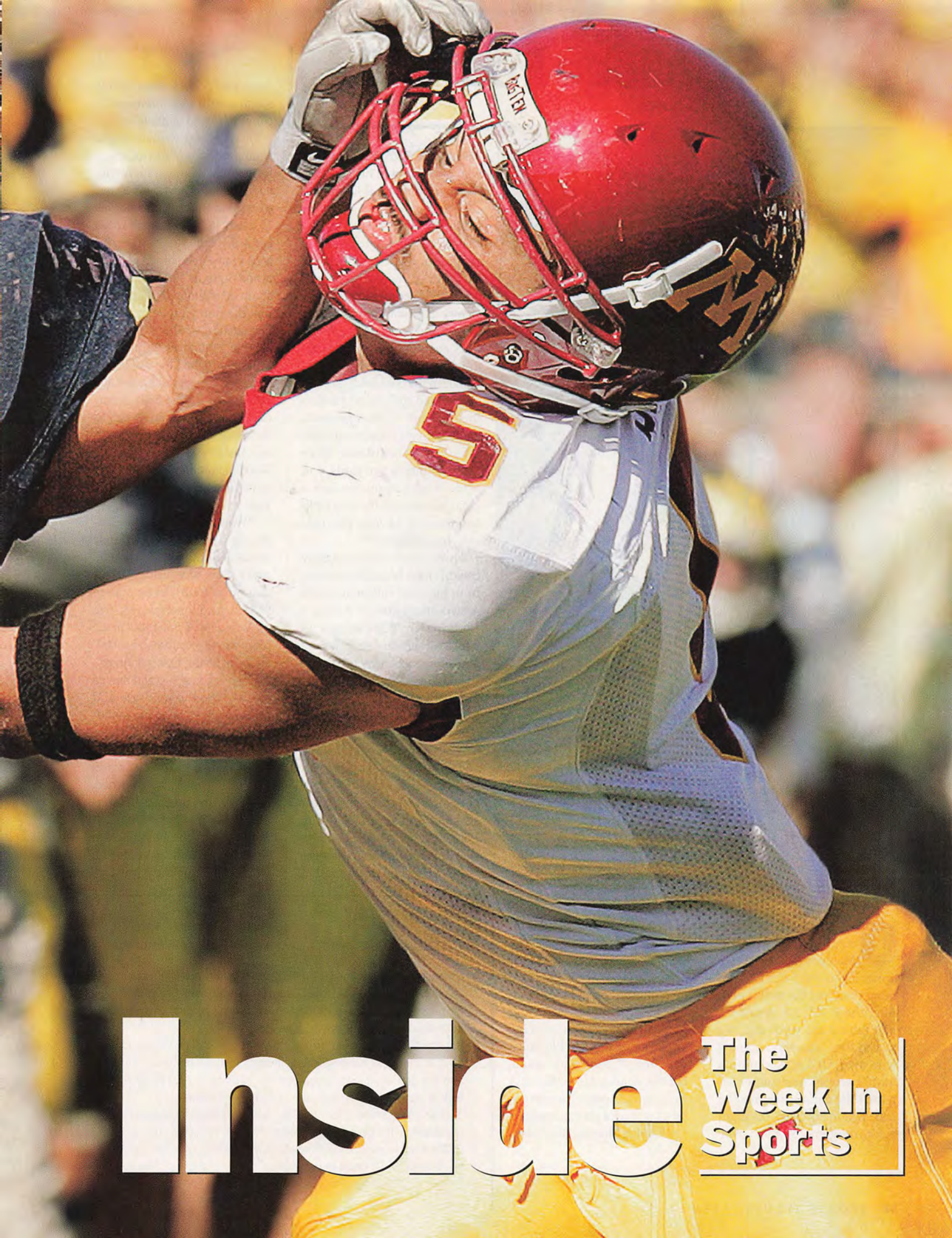
THE NFL

Warner clicking with Giants • Stokley gives Colts a third threat • Broncos roll out another 100-yard back



HART ATTACK Michigan running back Michael Hart fends off Minnesota linebacker Dominique Sims during the Wolverines' 27–24 victory last Saturday. The freshman rushed for 160 yards and a touchdown to help Michigan move into a first-place tie with Purdue and Wisconsin in the Big Ten.

Photograph by Simon Bruty



Inside

The Week In Sports

THE SHOE FITS Morency, who once slept in his cleats, has carried the 5–0 Cowboys.

State Secret

That *other* Oklahoma school has a star tailback too—Vernand Morancy, who's merely the nation's leading rusher

OKLAHOMA STATE running back Vernand Morency has raised eyebrows in Stillwater this fall with more than just his stellar play. After the 5' 10", 215-pound junior ran for 261 yards and two touchdowns in a season-opening win over UCLA, Oklahoma State's school newspaper reported the curious fact that he had slept in his cleats the night before the game. Morency, who leads the nation in rushing with 173.8 yards per game, insists he wasn't being superstitious, just eager. "I lay down on the bed for a minute before I took them off," he says. "I just wanted to try them on and break them in."

The story, though, has stuck with him. "I don't understand, but I'm all for it if it works," says running backs coach Larry Porter. "It's his way of getting ready."

Although Morency didn't sleep in his shoes last Friday night, he still played with a touch of magic on Saturday at Colorado, rushing for 165 yards and two touchdowns in a convincing 42–14 victory. His first score came on his second carry of the day, a nifty scamper over left tackle in which he sidestepped a defender in the backfield, skipped outside and sprinted 58 yards to the end zone. "V-Mo's got great balance," says Oklahoma State offensive coordinator Mike Gundy. "Inside five yards, you better wrap him up. He does a great job making the first tackler miss, and when he gets outside, he's so bouncy."

Three years ago Morency couldn't have been further away from big-time college football. A two-sport star at Miami's Northwestern High, he gave up a football scholarship to Miami and signed a contract with the Colorado Rockies, who selected him in the 14th round of the 1998 major league draft. As a speedy centerfielder for the Rockies' rookie league team in 1999, he hit .294 and stole six bases in a game. But he hit a wall, never batting higher than .230 in two subsequent seasons and topping out in Class A. "I felt I had a lot of upside in baseball," Morency says. "I still feel it's my best sport. But every year schools were calling me to see if I was interested in coming back to football."

One of Morency's minor league teammates was Matt Holliday, a former Oklahoma State recruit and the son of Cowboys baseball coach Tom Holliday. Matt hooked Morency up with football coach Les Miles, and Morency became a 22-year-old freshman at Oklahoma State in 2002. Though a sprained right ankle hampered him the first year, he broke out last season while backing up All–Big 12 tailback Tatum Bell. Morency rushed for 918 yards, including 269 against Kansas and 227 against Baylor. Bell's departure after last season, as well as the loss of quarterback Josh Fields and All-America receiver Rashaun Woods, left Morency as the Cowboys' lone offensive threat this year.

"We rolled the dice and basically designed our offense around him. So far, it's worked," says Gundy of a rushing attack that ranks fourth in the nation (285.2 yards per game). "He gives us a lot of versatility in the plays we call because of his ability to make the first guy miss."

Despite being 5–0 and ranked No. 16, Oklahoma State and Morency have been overshadowed by intrastate rival Oklahoma and its sensational freshman running back Adrian Peterson. Morency isn't worried, however, about being an afterthought in the Sooner State. "I feel like I'm the best back in America," he says. "Week in and week out, I'm going to prove that."

Three and Out

1. Florida coach **Ron Zook** is on thin ice. Following last Saturday's 24–21 home loss to LSU, the Gators have now lost more games at the Swamp in three seasons under Zook (six) than they did in 12 seasons under **Steve Spurrier** (five).
2. Virginia is a bona fide threat to win the ACC. The Cavaliers have a relentless running game, an aggressive defensive front and the one thing league competitors Miami and Florida State lack: a game-breaking quarterback, in **Marques Hagans.**
3. Utah could sneak into the BCS. The Fiesta Bowl, intrigued by the attention the Utes might generate—by becoming the first non-BCS school to play in a BCS bowl—is the likely destination if the No. 11 Utes (5–0) finish undefeated.

—Stewart Mandel

GARRETT W. ELLWOOD

WISCONSIN'S FORMULA

Badgering With Defense

In its 24–13 victory at Ohio State last Saturday, Wisconsin put on the type of dominating defensive performance that has become commonplace for the Badgers this fall. The Buckeyes had just 224 yards of offense, and their lone touchdown came on a first-quarter punt return. Wisconsin has held all six of its opponents to fewer than 100 rushing yards and has prevented four of them from scoring an offensive touchdown. The Badgers lead the nation in scoring and total defense, allowing 6.5 points and 198.3 yards per game. "Since I've been here, we've had the talent," says senior free safety Jim Leonhard. "Whether it's because of injury or intensity, we just never put it together for an extended period."

DOMINATOR James, a.k.a. the Eraser, is the leader of the Badgers' No. 1–ranked D.

That has changed this year, for two reasons: the presence of new defensive coordinator Bret Bielema and the return of senior defensive end Erasmus James, who missed last season with a dislocated hip but now leads the Big Ten with six sacks. Bielema, a demonstrative motivator, came to Wisconsin from Kansas State, where he was the co-coordinator last year of a unit that was sixth in the nation in total defense. His scheme disguises blitzes and coverages by keeping formations and shifts to a minimum. "Once there's confusion, people play slower," he says. "We want to show the same thing every time, but [other teams] won't know what we'll do out of it."

Opponents haven't known what to do with the 6' 4", 263-pound James. Aptly nicknamed the Eraser, he exhibits the kind of abandon that makes quarterbacks nervous. In a 16–3 win over Penn State on Sept. 25, James knocked Nittany Lions quarterbacks Zack Mills and Michael Robinson out of the game. "Erasmus plays every snap as though it's his last," says Bielema. James anchors a powerful line made up of four seniors, including All–Big Ten tackle Anttaj Hawthorne. That group is the primary reason Wisconsin dumped Buckeyes quarterback Justin Zwick five times on Saturday and leads the conference with 20 sacks.

"You can see on film that we're getting to the quarterback with four guys," says Leonhard. "When guys are that dominant, you can do a lot more in back, like drop seven into coverage. It's huge."

HEISMAN WATCH

A Freshman Front-runner

Halfway through the season, here are the leading candidates.

• **Adrian Peterson**, Fr., **RB, Oklahoma** (119 carries, 771 yards, 6 TDs)

After shredding Texas for 225 yards, he has emerged as the leading candidate. No freshman has ever won the Heisman, but Peterson is the nation's best player.

• **Kyle Orton**, Sr., **QB, Purdue** (119 for 172, 1,642 yards, 18 TDs)

Orton has put up PlayStation-like numbers, but tough games against Wisconsin and Michigan will make or break his season.

• **Reggie Bush**, Soph., **RB-KR, USC** (197.8 total yards per game, 7 TDs)

He may be the most explosive player in the nation, but he has to share carries with LenDale White and will split votes with Matt Leinart. □

Phil Taylor's Sidelines

THE WILLIAMS WAY

Much like would-be tacklers, interviewers who want to reach Memphis junior tailback **DeAngelo Williams** *(right)* have to go through his linemen first. Williams, who is already the Tigers' alltime leading rusher, brings two of his blockers to every postgame press conference and insists that the media ask them questions before interviewing him. Williams then grades his teammates on their answers. After Memphis's final game this season, he plans to bring the two linemen with the highest press-conference GPAs to the media session to face off in what he calls "the Super Bowl of interviews."

It's part of Williams's effort to make sure his linemen get recognition for his own Heisman-caliber numbers: 150.4 rushing yards per game, 5.1 per carry and 11 touchdowns for the 4–1 Tigers. Williams seems refreshingly uninterested in personal glory. He plans to give the ball he carried when he broke the school rushing record on Oct. 2 in a win against Houston to the family of the previous record holder, **Dave Casinelli**, who died in an auto accident in 1987. Williams probably won't win the Heisman, but he's already a winner.

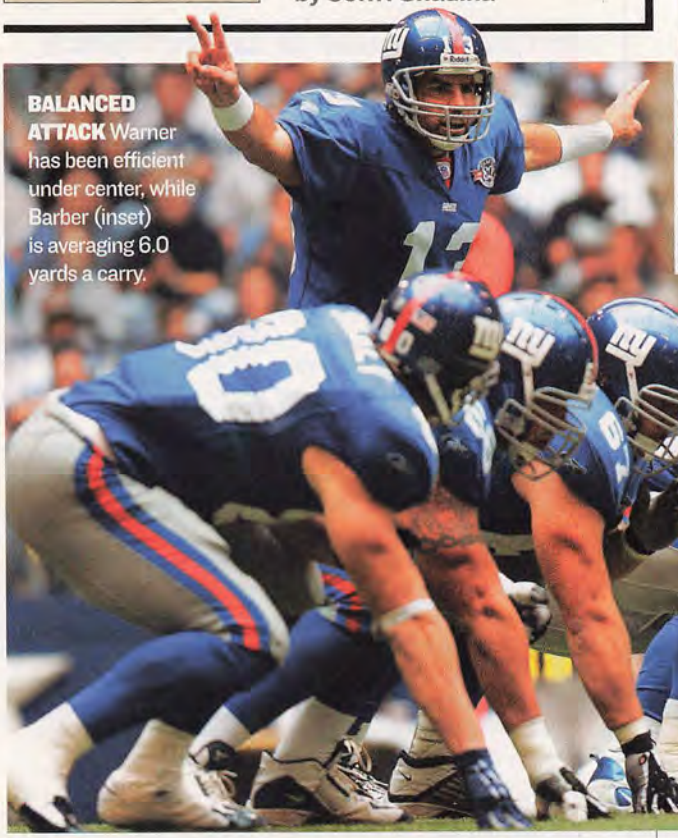
SEMINOLE LEADER

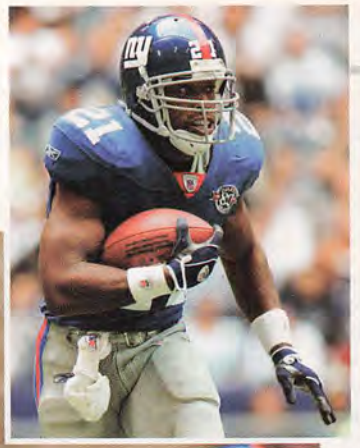
Florida State sophomore quarterback **Wyatt Sexton** *(left)* has thrown four touchdown passes and has led the Seminoles to three straight wins since taking over for injured starter **Chris Rix**. But Sexton has impressed his coaches and teammates more with what he hasn't done than with what he has. He's been a welcome change from the turnover-prone Rix, who sprained his right ankle in Florida State's third game, against Clemson. The Seminoles have enough athletic players that all they need is a quarterback who can run the offense efficiently and avoid the crushing mistake, and Sexton, with two interceptions in four games, is proving to be exactly that. His numbers in Florida State's 17–13 win at Syracuse last Saturday were typically solid but unspectacular—15 of 26, 169 yards, no touchdowns and one interception. Sexton has earned his teammates' confidence and trust, which is why Rix may not get his starting job back when he is healthy.

ARMY WINS—FINALLY!

Given the current state of world affairs, there was something a little unsettling about Army's holding the nation's longest losing streak. Regardless of their football allegiances, most fans would no doubt like to see the Black Knights have more success. So the end of Army's 19-game skid with a 48–29 win over Cincinnati last Saturday surely came as welcome news to almost everyone but the Bearcats. "It's the most disappointing loss of my life," said Cincinnati quarterback **Gino Guidugli**, who threw for 350 yards and four touchdowns. "We're probably the laughingstock of the nation." Maybe it would make the Bearcats feel better if they considered the loss a patriotic act.

JOHN BIEVER (JAMES); JOE MURPHY/WIREIMAGE.COM (WILLIAMS); KEVIN RIVOLI/AP (SEXTON)





BALANCED ATTACK Warner has been efficient under center, while Barber (inset) is averaging 6.0 yards a carry.

A Leader Again

Having regained his passing touch, Kurt Warner has the surprising Giants off to their fastest start since 1993

GIANTS general manager Ernie Accorsi loves to tell the story of how he decided that beleaguered quarterback Kurt Warner was worth signing as a free agent in June. Of all things, Accorsi made up his mind after watching tape of Warner's six-fumble performance in the Rams' season-opening loss to New York in 2003. Warner took some vicious hits, and the one thing that impressed the G.M. the most was this: The guy never gives up.

Resiliency has defined Warner throughout his career—he went from grocery clerk to two-time league MVP and Super Bowl champion—and now he's got people shaking their heads again. With a 26–10 upset of the Cowboys in Dallas on Sunday, the Warner-led Giants are 4–1 and off to their best start since 1993. Warner's passing numbers against the Cowboys were typically modest (18 of 33 for 217 yards and a touchdown), but they don't tell the story of what he's doing for New York's offense.

The knock on Warner as his career fizzled in St. Louis was that he panicked too often in the pocket and couldn't overcome injuries to the thumb on his passing hand. But on Sunday he remained cool under constant pressure and made accurate throws in clutch situations. Most important, for the fourth time in five games he didn't throw an interception. Warner has been picked off once in 147 attempts this season. "He really has a great presence," says Giants center Shaun O'Hara. "You can see how playing in so many big games throughout his career has given him a lot of confidence. He knows how to get things done, and that makes us all feel confident in what we can do."

The Giants are as balanced as any offense in the NFL. Running back Tiki Barber is off to the best start of his eight-year career. Against Dallas he had 198 total yards (122 rushing, 76 receiving) and iced the game with a 55-yard catch-and-run, setting up his own three-yard touchdown dash. A line that was supposed to be shaky has been adequate in pass protection while opening holes for a rushing attack that ranks fourth in the league.

But New York's offense runs through Warner, who was signed

SI.com/football

to give the Giants time to develop rookie first-round draft pick Eli Manning. After six seasons in the Rams' wide-open system, Warner says the toughest adjustment he has had to make in New York is learning how to be a more conservative quarterback. The Giants have asked him to toss high-percentage passes and limit his downfield throws. Thus he's averaging 225 passing yards a game, which would've been about two quarters' worth of work on a good day in St. Louis. "I'm being aggressive with restraint," he says. "In St. Louis they didn't care if I made a mistake, because they believed I would make more plays than errors. They want me to do my thing here but without the mistakes. I still want to influence the game's outcome with my arm, but now I'm doing it in more subtle ways."

Warner's strong performance has allowed New York to stick to its plan to bring Manning along slowly. In fact, Warner's play has, at least temporarily, silenced talk of when the rookie might take over. "I don't even want to talk about that," Accorsi says.

Warner, who signed a two-year deal that is voidable after this season, is content in knowing he's making the most of this opportunity. "The only thing I care about is our record," he says. "I came here to win games and maybe another championship, and the best thing for me is seeing that we've only lost one game."

COLTS' THIRD WIDEOUT

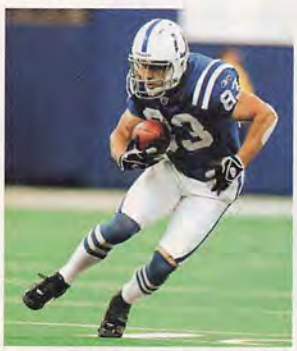
Healthy Stokley Hurting Foes

Brandon Stokley hoped he would make it through this season without having to answer questions about his durability or being remembered solely as the player who scored the first touchdown in the Ravens' Super Bowl win over the Giants in January 2001. So far, so good.

JOELLE WIGGINS (2)

Stokley, the Colts' third receiver, has become as dangerous as any other player in the team's multidimensional offense. In a 35–14 win over the Raiders on Sunday he caught three passes, giving him 25 for the year—a career high for receptions in a season after only five games. "When teams play us, they're looking to stop Peyton Manning and Marvin Harrison first and Edgerrin James second," says Stokley, whose 41 receiving yards against Oakland gave him 352 for the year, to go with three touchdowns. "I know they're not preparing to stop me. But that creates some opportunities I can take advantage of."

Stokley does most of his damage from the slot position in three-receiver formations. Because Harrison and fellow wideout Reggie Wayne attract so much attention on the outside, Stokley has ample space to exploit one-on-one matchups against nickelbacks and linebackers. That's what Indianapolis expected to get out of Stokley after signing him to a two-year, $2.9 million free-agent deal in March 2003.



A SEASON'S WORK In five games Stokley has already set a career high for receptions.

At the time Stokley was known mostly for being injury-prone, having been sidelined for 31 of Baltimore's 64 games after the Ravens chose him in the fourth round of the 1999 draft out of Southwestern Louisiana. He was still recovering from foot surgery when he signed with the Colts. Intrigued by his speed and impressed by his unselfish attitude, Indianapolis decided he was worth the risk—only to see Stokley miss 10 of the first 12 games in '03 with an assortment of injuries.

Finally, the Colts appear to be getting their money's worth. Over the team's last 11 games, including the playoffs, Stokley has 53 receptions for 742 yards and nine touchdowns. In the same span Harrison has 60 catches for 782 yards and seven scores, and Wayne has 51 receptions for 695 yards and six touchdowns. "The way Brandon is playing," says receivers coach Clyde Christensen, "I don't think people are underestimating him anymore."

BRONCOS' BREAKOUT

Career Game For Droughns

Before Denver's 20–17 victory over Carolina on Sunday, Reuben Droughns was just a workmanlike blocking fullback with a quick smile. He came out of that game looking like the next in a long line of productive Broncos running backs.

After carrying the ball a total of 80 times in 45 career games, Droughns got the call 30 times against the Panthers and ran for 193 yards, churning out tough yards on third down and helping Denver control the clock late in the game. His performance was reminiscent of games turned in by former Broncos runners like Terrell Davis, Olandis Gary, Mike Anderson and Clinton Portis—and was the kind of effort that an inconsistent ground attack sorely needed.

A fifth-year player out of Oregon who is with his third NFL organization, Droughns got his opportunity after backfield mate Quentin Griffin was sidelined with an ankle injury. Coach Mike Shanahan shifted the 5' 11", 207-pound Droughns to the running-back spot, instead of starting veteran Garrison Hearst or rookie Tatum Bell, because he liked Droughns's work ethic and open-field running ability.

King's Corner

HOT TOPIC

Because their anger is so deep, the Dolphins will probably trade—rather than take back—Ricky Williams *(right)*, who retired unexpectedly in July but now says he wants to return to football. "I talk to Ricky almost every day," says his agent, Leigh Steinberg, "and he tells me, 'I really wish I was playing.' " Here are the rushing-poor teams most likely to take a risk on the enigmatic, 27-year-old Williams, who if he does return could face up to a one-year suspension for repeated violations of the NFL's substance-abuse policy.

Raiders They badly need a productive back, and this organization never met an outlaw it didn't like.

Bucs Coach Jon Gruden is desperate for playmakers on offense, but Miami's asking price might be too much for a team that gave up four high draft picks to get Gruden from Oakland.

Cardinals New coach Dennis Green, who handled Randy Moss for four years in Minnesota, is used to stars who cause headaches.

BY THE NUMBERS

Randy Moss played in his 100th NFL game on Sunday, catching five passes for 90 yards and two touchdowns in Minnesota's 34–28 overtime win against the Texans. Here's how Moss's numbers stack up against those of Jerry Rice through their first 100 games.

PLAYER	REC.	YARDS	AVG.	TDS
Moss	549	8,680	15.8	84
Rice	492	8,556	17.4	87

MATCHUP OF THE WEEK

Chargers running back LaDainian Tomlinson versus Falcons quarterback Michael Vick. This is the first meeting between San Diego and Atlanta since they pulled off the 2001 predraft trade involving these two players. After three-plus seasons, here's the verdict as to which club came out ahead in the deal: a slim edge to San Diego because we don't know if Vick can stay healthy. Tomlinson has started all 53 games in his career; Vick has played in 33 of 53. Tomlinson has scored 46 touchdowns; Vick has run for 10 and thrown for 24. Tomlinson *(above)*, already the Chargers' career rushing leader, is destined to be a back for the ages if he avoids a serious injury. Vick will have to produce as a top five passer to make the trade an even swap.

THREE POINTS

1. Unless rookie quarterback Ben Roethlisberger starts to struggle, the Steelers would be crazy to go back to Tommy Maddox when he returns from an injury to his throwing elbow later this month.
2. I'll be stunned if the 4–0 Jets don't make the playoffs. No other team in memory has had an easier opening stretch, and New York's opponent this week is 1–4 San Francisco. Included on the November slate are four games against teams that are below .500: the Dolphins, Bills, Browns and Cardinals.
3. The two-game suspension the NFL gave the Ravens' Jamal Lewis for his role in an attempted drug transaction four years ago (before he ever suited up for Baltimore) was fair, when you consider he will also forfeit four game checks, or some $761,000. —*Peter King*

Peter King's Monday Morning Quarterback, every week at **si.com/football**.

THOMAS E. WITTE/WIREIMAGE.COM (STOKLEY); MICHAEL FRANCIS MCELROY/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL (WILLIAMS); MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS

(Droughns averages 25.6 yards on kickoff returns.)

Taken by the Lions in the third round of the 2000 draft, Droughns spent his rookie season on injured reserve, was waived after playing one game the following year and was signed to the Dolphins' practice squad. Detroit re-signed him in October 2001, and he played in nine games. He joined the Broncos as a free agent in '02 and made four starts last season at fullback.

"Every running back wants to carry the ball," Droughns said after his big game on Sunday, "and it is just a dream to have this chance."

DISPATCHES

Lions Stiffen Against the Run

In their season opener the Lions snapped a league-record 24-game road losing streak, and in beating the Falcons 17–10 on Sunday, they won their second straight away from home. Facing the NFL's top rushing offense, Detroit allowed only 94 yards on 27 Atlanta carries; feature back Warrick Dunn was limited to 44 yards on 18 attempts. Run-stopping tackles Shaun Rogers and Dan Wilkinson anchor the Lions' defensive line, which Atlanta running backs coach Ollie Wilson called "as good a front as we've faced this year." . . . Duce Staley, signed as a free agent in the offseason to shore up the Steelers' ground game, ran for 117 yards in a 34–23 victory over the Browns. It was the third straight game in which Staley had gone over the 100-yard mark—and the first time he has achieved that feat in his eight-year career. Last season Pittsburgh got a total of two 100-yard games from its running backs. . . . Coming off their bye week, the Seahawks blew a 17-point lead in the final 5:34 of regulation, then lost to the Rams 33–27 in overtime. Under Mike Holmgren, Seattle is 6–0 in games leading up to the bye, 0–6 in games following it. □

Dr. Z's Forecast

I think the worst thing that could have happened to the Patriots on Sunday was the way Seattle lost to St. Louis. The Seahawks knew they were a good team. Going into the season, they knew that the only thing that might keep them from the Super Bowl that many people were predicting was the lack of a big league defense. But through three games, and then 3½ quarters against the Rams, undefeated Seattle had the top-ranked defense in the league. Then the sky fell in.

St. Louis turned loose one of those furious assaults that coach Mike Martz likes to talk about, and the Seahawks' 17-point fourth-quarter lead went up in smoke. Now, going into a road game against New England, Seattle is not just a good team, but a good team that's mad.

The game in Foxborough will be a landmark one for the Seahawks. If they win it, they'll be part of history, the club that ended New England's 19-game streak, The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance. They'll regain their place on the pedestal with Philly as the NFC's front-runners for the Super Bowl. They'll have taken the next step. If they lose, they'll just be another 3–2 club wondering how good they really are.

The Rams' spirited comeback came by way of the air, naturally, but the interesting thing was that the bulk of the payoff plays at the end were accomplished by relative unknowns—Shaun McDonald, Mike Furrey, Brandon Manumaleuna. And those plays weren't at the expense of the star cornerbacks, Marcus Trufant and Ken Lucas. They came off the coverage of lesser lights such as strong safety Terreal Bierria and nickelback Bobby Taylor, the former Eagle.

I think the Patriots will flood the field with pass catchers and try to beat the Hawks' third- and fourth-best defenders with their third and fourth receivers. Of course, the downside is that in so doing, New England becomes vulnerable to the blitz. But Tom Brady is a master at beating it, and Seattle gave up the Rams' winning touchdown in overtime by going big-blitz and then suffering as Marc Bulger calmly went long, so the Seahawks might be blitz-shy now.

Just who those Patriots pass catchers will be remains a mystery. Deion Branch and Troy Brown were out of commission against the Dolphins on Sunday. Bethel Johnson was deactivated as part of a "coaching decision," which sounds like somebody was being taught a lesson. So strapped was New England that its third wideout became Kevin Kasper, who had been signed four days before the game. That may help explain Brady's meager stats.

The Seahawks still have to show that they can beat a team with a winning record on the road, a feat they have accomplished only once since the start of the 2000 season, and that was two years ago against Atlanta. I don't think they'll do it this time. **The Patriots are the pick.**

My favorite upset on the board is **Cincinnati** winning at Cleveland. **Buffalo** will get its first victory, against poor Miami, and the **Chiefs**, coming off their bye, will beat the Jaguars in Jacksonville. The **Lions** always play the Packers tough in Detroit, so I'll give them a slight nod. Can the Cowboys lose two straight at home and to a rookie QB? I don't think so. **Dallas** will beat Pittsburgh.

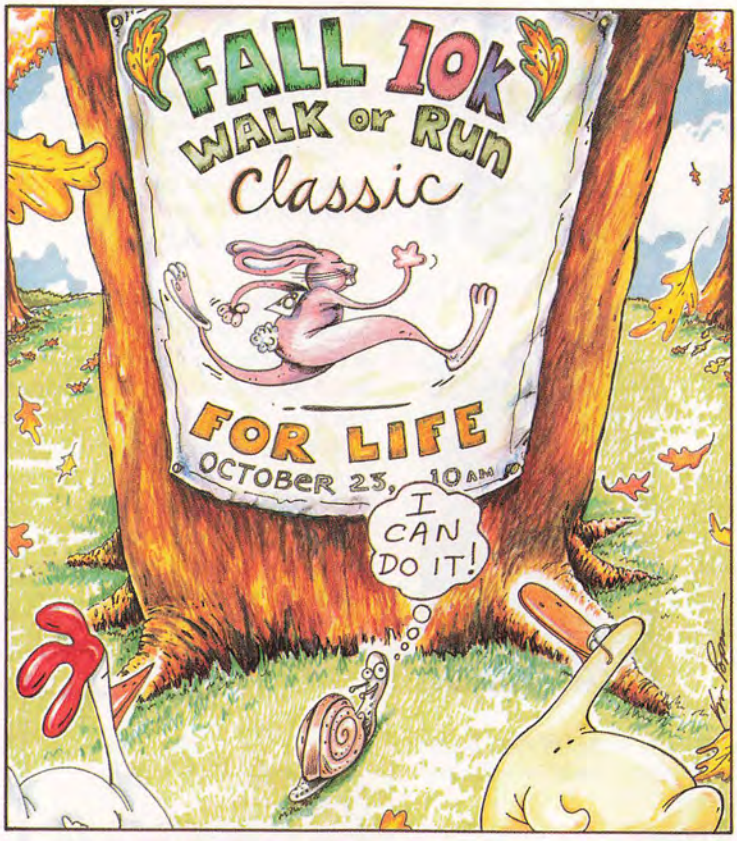
Denver takes the grudge match in Oakland, the **Vikings** have too much firepower for New Orleans, and finally, only because I always pick the Monday-nighter, the **Rams**—surprise!—will beat Tampa Bay. *—Paul Zimmerman*

Last Week: 2–7 **Season: 30–19**

OTTO GREULE JR./GETTY IMAGES

UNDER THE GUN Lucas and his mates in the secondary will have to slow the big-play Pats.

Dr. Z writes exclusively for the web every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at si.com/nfl.



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Sooners Get Last Laugh

by Rick Reilly

OVERHEARD last Saturday outside the Cotton Bowl, where the Texas State Fair raged on, and inside the stadium, where the Texas State Unfair was played out—with No. 2 Oklahoma aiming to barbecue No. 5 Texas for the fifth straight year.

Unidentified Oklahoma fan, walking past the fair rides before the game: *"You think if we beat 'em again, a Texas fan will climb to the top of the Ferris wheel and jump?"*

His buddy: *"Nah, he'd quit halfway up."*

Beer-guzzling Texas fan, just inside a stadium gate: *"You know what you get when you put 30 Oklahoma fans in the same room? A full set of teeth."*

Beer-guzzling Oklahoma fan, not much later: *"You know what happens to a Texas fan when he takes Viagra? He gets taller."*

OU flag girl Becka Smith, after she ran onto the field during the presentation of the Big 12 team flags with the Texas flag purposely rolled up tight on the pole: *"I wanted to hang it upside down, but they said I'd get kicked off [the flag team]."*

Gray-haired OU fan, realizing that he was seated smack dab on football's 38th parallel, the 50-yard line that divides the Cotton Bowl into perfect burnt-orange and crimson-red halves: *"I don't like sittin' this close to a Texas fan, but he seems pretty nice. I guess their manners have gotten a lot better since we're always whuppin' up on 'em."*

The goateed Texas fan stuck next to him: *"Hey, we got 17 more wins than you [in the 104-year series history]."*

Burly Texas fan Gabriel Pineda, sitting in the first row, as OU takes a 3–0 lead: *"The problem with this game is it starts so dang early [11 a.m. kickoff, CDT]. There's no time to get enough drinks in you."*

Guy behind him: *"The way you guys are playin', you need it."*

Red-draped OU fan Carson Thompson, 65, seated next to his burnt-orange-swathed 71-year-old brother, Marlin: *"Why you keep holdin' your fingers like that [in the Hook-'em-Horns sign]? Oh, yeah—it means you guys are Number 11, right?"*

Marlin: *"What can I say? They're his tickets."*

Carson: *"We've promised ourselves we'll only do this 30 more years, then we're stoppin'. He'll be 101, and I'll be 95. They'll wheel us in on stretchers with IVs hooked up to us."*

Marlin: *"Yeah, full of beer."*

Ryan Maxwell, one of the student Ruf/Nek caretakers of the Sooner Schooner, the pony-powered covered wagon that careers around the field at home games after OU scores: *"We don't get to take it out at the Cotton Bowl until after the game, and only if we win. But it's better than holdin' on to a cow that doesn't do anything."*

Wales Madden, Maxwell's glum counterpart, holding on to longhorn steer Bevo XIV in the other end zone: *"So they take care of a couple midget ponies. Big wooo! Bevo's a grand champion."*

Maxwell: *"Used to be they'd have to walk Bevo past us and we'd shoot off our shotguns [with blanks], and he'd crap all over!"*

Madden: *"What?"*

Maxwell: *"If we win, we take the schooner out and run around and hang off the back. What do they do if they win here?"*

Madden: *"I don't really know. I've only been here four years."*

> The 50-yard line divides the Cotton Bowl into perfect burnt-orange and crimson-red halves, making it football's 38th parallel.

T-shirt on Sooners fan at halftime: *LOSE CARBS. EAT LONGHORN.*

OU fan Jennifer Zuyus, sitting on the 50-yard-line boundary and pointing to the empty seat next to her, vacated by a Texas fan, just as OU took a 12–0 fourth-quarter lead: *"He left after we scored. I waved bye-bye to him with five fingers."*

Random Sooners nut, upon seeing a Texas fan with a T-shirt that read KEEPMACKBROWN.COM: *"Yeah, keep him! We love kickin' his ass!"*

Texas high schooler, to his dad, upon leaving the stadium after the Longhorns' 12–0 loss and wading into the madness of the fair and a sea of OU fans: *"Are we gonna catch crap?"*

Dad: *"Nah, you lose to them five times straight, they just feel sorry for you. Maybe they'll buy us a snow cone."*

Hangdog-faced Texas husband: *"Y'know what the worst part of losing is? We can't stay and enjoy the fair. Too much abuse."*

His wife, perhaps remembering the fair's alligator sausages on a stick, tamale balls and whirling, spinning rides: *"Who cares? Either way, you wanna throw up."* □

If you have a comment for Rick Reilly, send it to *reilly@siletters.com*

PETER READ MILLER

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